

ANCIENT COIN COLLECTING

2nd Edition



WAYNE G. SAYLES

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ANCIENT COIN COLLECTING III



WAYNE G. SAYLES

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Ancient coin collecting

III : the Roman

World-politics and

propaganda

ANCIENT COIN COLLECTING III

The Roman World—Politics and Propaganda

WAYNE G. SAYLES

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PREFACE

This is the third volume of a series intended to introduce the broad field of ancient coinage to prospective new collectors. The first volume was a general road map to the hobby. The second focused on ancient coinage of the Greeks, and the present volume introduces Roman coinage struck at Republican and Imperial mints. Those Roman coins struck at mints in the Roman provinces will be introduced in the succeeding volume. The sequence of these volumes, six in all, is essentially chronological in terms of cultural development—excepting the final volume of the series which will cover a broad range of nonclassical cultures in antiquity.

Although this work falls midway in the series, many newcomers to the field of ancient coin collecting choose Roman coinage for their initiation. To many, Latin inscriptions are less intimidating than those in the Greek or Eastern languages. Also, due perhaps to a bias in our educational curricula, the personages encountered tend to be more familiar— notwithstanding Alexander the Great's universal popularity.

The organization of material in this volume follows the same pattern as its predecessors. Many short chapters deal with a variety of subjects. The intention of this approach is to increase the utility of the work as a desktop guide and locator. The books of this series are surveys, and brief ones at that. It is not possible to examine the entire field of Roman coinage in a work of this size. Roman Imperial Coinage, the standard numismatic reference of this series, is comprised of ten substantial volumes and even this does not encompass all known types. Roman Republican Coinage, the standard work by Michael Crawford, requires another two volumes. The provincial coinage is even more extensive—and largely unpublished. Ancient Coin Collecting III supplements Volume I of the series, and will serve as a more detailed road map to the collecting of Roman coins. Together, they will save the collector time and effort by synthesizing and distilling much of the information that every serious collector should learn.

The books of this series forego footnoting in favor of textual and bibliographic references. In an introductory work, we feel that the beginning collector will find this approach more "user-friendly" than the traditional approach required of scholars. Where additional sources of information are recommended, we have provided a bibliography at the end of that section. In the Imperial portrait gallery, we have provided a bibliography for each ruler. These include a mixture of numismatic monographs, articles and biographies. Many are in languages other than English. Some are obscure, and most will be

available only through the loan services of an academic library. This is unfortunate, but a fact of life in the ancient numismatic field.

We have attempted to record Latin names formally in the genealogies but certain Anglicized spellings have been retained in the text due to their familiarity. Rendering well known names like Mark Antony as Marcus Antonius Octavian as Octavianus or Hadrian as Hadrianus

seems contrary to the purpose of this book.

At the risk of oversimplifying a complex subject, we might say that

ancient Greek coins are, on the whole, idealistic in their design—whereas the images on Roman coins are more pragmatic. It could be argued that this reflects one of the basic differences between the two cultures. Roman coins, especially of the Imperial and early Imperial periods, often display portraits of exceptional merit and are considered by many to be great works of art, but they are most often collected for their historical and political relevance. Nummation was an extremely important aspect of Roman numismatic iconography. In many, if not most, cases the images and inscriptions on Roman coins were intended to advance specialized interests. As the title suggests, this book will approach ancient Roman coinage from that perspective, and examine these coins as instruments of political propaganda. Much of the imagery on Roman coins is intended to convey an impression—sometimes based on fact, sometimes on fiction. It is interesting and entertaining to follow the exploits of certain rulers whose boastful claims were a bit bigger than life.

The study of ancient coins, from any culture, can require substantial effort. It is not possible, even for the most ardent student, to learn all that there is to know about them. The successful (satisfied) collector will usually learn to focus his or her attention on a succinct area which can be digested, understood, and mastered. In the Roman series, this often means specializing in the coinage of a single emperor or dynasty. For those who do not seek the challenge of focused research, the Roman series also offers the straightforward and popular alternatives of assembling a "set" of imperial portraits or a customized topical collection.

The synthesized information and copious illustrations in this text are intended to expose the reader to the diversity of Roman coinage. Because of their rarity, it is not likely that the average collector will be able to acquire some of the coins depicted, but that should not be discouraging. There are many interesting and beautiful coins in this series which are easy to obtain, even at modest prices. As in the earlier volumes, it is our intention throughout to project visual images rather than to document specific coin types or

specimens. Therefore, the illustrations herein are not necessarily presented at precisely the actual size. Where the illustrated size varies significantly from the actual specimen, we have included a multiplier in parentheses. Since this is neither a catalogue nor attribution guide, we have illustrated only the obverse or reverse of a coin as appropriate to the purpose at hand.

Even as these words are being written, the utility of electronic media as a research tool is improving dramatically. Some of the world's most highly respected centers of learning have opened their databases to access through the Internet. No longer a gathering place of "techies" the World Wide Web has become a vast user-friendly library of information, with the wonderful feature of a powerful search capability. Web users interested in ancient numismatics were at one time limited in the amount of information retrievable. But, as the potential of this medium has captured the imagination of amateurs and professionals alike, the amount of downloadable information has grown enormously. The recent addition of a searchable database of the collection of the American Numismatic Society, some 533,000 coins in all, is an extraordinary benefit to the independent numismatist who cannot travel to the museums of the world. More institutions are sure to follow suit. Still, it will be a long time before the computer replaces the printing press. We all love our books, and will probably continue to do so.

We hope that the following pages will serve as a catalyst to further study and foster a deeper appreciation of the hobby. Welcome to the fascinating world of ancient Roman coins!

Gainesville, Missouri 1997 W.G.S.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are certain axioms among ancient coin collectors of our age, and among collectors of Roman coins in particular. One is that the majority of veteran collectors were first exposed to the field through the

works of Zander Klawans and David Sear. We all are indebted to these pioneers of the modern collector fraternity. Reading *Dating Roman Imperial Coins* was written by Zander Klawans in the 1950s, and David Sear's *Roman Coins and Their Values* was first published in 1964. These two works have inspired and nurtured more novice collectors of ancient coins than any other publications in the hobby. The fact that they are still in print after all these years (with amazingly few revisions) is testimony to their intrinsic value.

Illustrated in this third volume of the Ancient Coin Collecting series are some of the finest Roman coins to have come on the ancient coin market in this

century. We are indebted to Classical Numismatic Group, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania and Leu Numismatik of Zurich, Switzerland for permission to illustrate a great many of the exceptional coins sold at public auction by those firms. We are also indebted to Harlan J. Berk, of Chicago, Illinois and Edward J. Waddell of Gaithersburg, Maryland, for permission to reproduce photos from their auction catalogues. Thanks go as well to the American Numismatic Society, for permission to reproduce the photo of a rare solidus of Leontius. Several photos of other rare specimens are by Andrew Daneman. Line art illustrations were extracted from Duruy's History of Rome, 1894 edition.

The Numismatic Bibliography compiled by Elvira Clain-Stefanelli and the tables of Roma?: Imperial Genealogies by G. Egerton Ryerson, were extremely helpful in leading us to reference material for the gallery of emperors contained herein. Our thanks also go to Alan Walker and Dennis Kroh for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Once again, the constant help and encouragement of my wife Doris, especially during the tedious hours of proofreading and manuscript preparation, has been invaluable.

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(also see: Index to Roman Emperors - page 162)

The Founding of Rome



AR denarius (x1.5)

Julius Caesar, 47-46 BC

(Aeneas —the claimed ancestor of

Caesar—carrying his father, Anchises,

and the Palladium from Troy)

The origins of Rome are related in a confusing array of legends. Even the ancient Romans were confused about their origins, and one will find that the accounts vary significantly. There are, however, two main legends, which ultimately become interwoven.

According to one tradition, the Trojan prince Aeneas left Troy on the night that it fell to the Greeks and gathered a contingent of men to set out in search of a site for a new Troy. He took with him his father, Anchises, and his young son Ascanius (later referred to as Iulus). The tales of his journey are numerous and contradictory, but the most widely accepted version seems to be that of the Greek historian Hellenicus (fifth century BC) which recounts the eventual arrival of Aeneas in Italy. The Roman historians Cato the Elder and Livy embellished that early tradition, but the poet Publius Virgilius Maro—known simply as Virgil, (70-19 BC)—is most famous for the legend, as presented in his *Aeneid*. According to Virgil, during his wanderings Aeneas stopped at

Epirus, a country in western Greece. There, he met Helenus—a soothsayer and son of the Trojan king Priam who had escaped the sack of Troy. Helenus foretold that the journey of Aeneas would end when he saw on the bank of a river in Italy a sow with 30 piglets. Following a protracted adventure, that site was found on the Tiber river. Aeneas settled there, marrying the daughter of the local king, Latinus. The journey of Aeneas and his men, in Virgil's account, is very similar to the wanderings of Odysseus, and the influence of Homer is obvious.

The other major tradition of Rome's founding involves two brothers, Romulus and Remus. These twin brothers were the offspring of Mars, the god of war, and Rhea Silvia. This Vestal Virgin was the daughter of Numitor, King of Alba Longa. Upon birth, they were placed in a reed boat and abandoned on the Tiber. They floated ashore near the Palatine Hill and were found by a she-wolf who



AE as, AD 143/144 Antoninus Pius

(Sow under an oak tree suckling piglets)



AV aureus, (x1.5) Domitian, AD 77/78

(She-Wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, reed boat in exergue)

suckled them until they were found by a shepherd. Upon reaching adulthood, they helped restore Numitor to the throne of Alba Longa and then left to found a new city at the site where they were rescued from the Tiber. The brothers fought over whose name the city should bear, and Remus was killed. Consequently the new site became known as Rome.

The two legends are tied together through the Kings of Alba Longa. The son

of Aeneas, now called Iulus (remember, there isn't a J in the Latin alphabet, so "J" reads as "I"), founded this ancient city of Latium. It was through the lineage of Alba Longian kings that Romulus and Remus were born and the bloodline of the Julian family originated. The above is only a very rudimentary account of the mythological traditions that are associated with the founding of Rome, but it will at least introduce the principal characters. For more detailed versions of the traditions one should consult a specialized work on Roman mythology (see bibliography, p. 165).

The founding of Rome and its early history, real or imagined, is a recurring topic in Roman numismatic iconography. The Republican series is particularly rich in mythological allusions, but the collector will find many similar motifs on coins of the later Empire as well. Most common of these references is the depiction of Romulus and Remus with the she-wolf. It was a timeless image and never lost popularity, appearing on numerous coins from the Republic through the fourth century AD. The anniversaries of Rome's founding were celebrated with elaborate games and fantastic entertainments. And, they were commemorated on special issues of coinage. The main celebrations were held at 100 year, or occasionally 110 year (saecular) intervals. The most important celebration of the founding took place in the year 248, when Philip I (ironically known as Philip the Arab) hosted the Millenary Games in honor of the city's 1000th anniversary. These games were highlighted by the assembly of rare animals from all parts of the empire, and great contests were held in the Circus and the Amphitheater.

In AD 330, when Constantine the Great founded his capital at Byzantium, naming it Constantinople and calling it the "new Rome", he issued a set of commemorative coins. One type depicted the personification "Constantinopolis", the other depicted Roma with the she-wolf and twins on its reverse. Although his aim was to honor the birth of a new city, the images of the past were an integral part of that foundation.

The World of the Romans

The title "Roman" was more than a birthright, it was an accolade. The whole world, from Scotland to China knew of the Romans and their institutions. At the height of their power, few challengers ventured forth. To be a Roman, in the days of imperial grandeur, was a guarantee of entree to the emporia and cultural centers of the world.

Rome did not enter the world of international politics—which in ancient times meant military expansion—until quite late. At the time of Alexander the Great's conquest of Asia, the Romans were still trying to tie up loose ends with the Samnites and Etruscans in Italy. The intrepid mercenary Pyrrhus tried

his hand at suppressing the Romans in 280 BC, but failed to crush their spirit. In fact, he seems only to have pricked the heel of a hibernating bear.

The second quarter of the third century brought Roman victories throughout southern Italy, and Corsica. It also brought Rome's first encounter with Carthage in the First Punic War. The upstart Romans failed to crush the Carthaginians, but they learned valuable lessons about foreign war and military diplomacy. The last quarter of that century saw the birth of great leaders like Cato and Scipio Africanus, and the appointment of Rome's first ambassadors to Athens and Corinth. Northern Italy fell to the Romans, but Carthage remained a problem and Rome entered into the Second Punic War with the African giant. This time, the conclusion was more decisive. The Carthaginian general Hannibal was soundly defeated by Scipio Africanus (the elder) at Zama in 202.

The Romans, flushed with victory, quickly moved into Greece, where the Macedonian Kingdom fell to their armies. They continued to expand, both East and West, and once again ran up against Carthage. The Third Punic War, which lasted from 149 to 146 ended with the sack of



Carthage. Of a population numbering about 500,000, it is written that only 50,000 survived the sack by Scipio Africanus the younger, and those were sold into slavery. Carthage ceased to exist. In 146 BC the Romans controlled Sicily, Sardinia, Spain, Transalpine Gaul, North Africa (excluding Egypt) and Greece—in addition to all of Italy. They added Asia Minor to the list in 133. The entire Mediterranean was crumbling to Roman military supremacy.

The first century BC brought an age of power struggles internally. The fruits of conquest apparently became too sweet for the good of Rome as its finest generals and statesmen murdered each other in a quest for glory. Evolving from the internecine wars was the system of government we call the Roman Empire. With absolute control in the hands of one decision maker, the power

of Rome was on the rise again. The empire expanded into Britain and the upper Balkans, pressing east into Armenia and Mesopotamia and south into Arabia. The Roman World



had become larger than Alexander's empire, and was essentially under the control of a single man—soon to become a god, it not one already.

Western Europe figured prominently in the history of the Roman people. From Julius Caesar's Gallic War, to the Invasion of Britain by

Claudius and the rise of "provincial" rulers in Spain, Rome was very much affected by the events and changes taking place in the West. This will become all the more obvious as one peruses the historical vignettes of emperors in a later chapter. While Romans enjoyed the benefits of trade and riches from the East, and occasionally the novelty of oriental mysteries in their worship, they were culturally and ethnically closer to the West. The diffusion of Roman civilization throughout Europe formed the basis for its character today, and even in its darkest days, the ravaging hordes liked to style themselves as Romans.



BRITAIN

Boulogne

PARIS

GERMANY



Vienne

GAUL

Marseille

.Narbonne

SPAIN

WESTERN EUROPE during the Roman Period

The Romans would dearly have loved to control Persia and the Silk Road to China, but in the East they met more formidable enemies than they had encountered in the Mediterranean and Europe. After the conquest of Asia Minor, the armies of Rome pushed on eastward; as Alexander had done some two centuries earlier. But their fate was not to be as glorious as the Macedonian's. Several forays met with minor success, but in 53 BC the general Crassus took an army east against the Parthians, and was massacred (see page 169). Another army, twice the size, under Mark Antony, met a nearly similar fate. It was not until the reign of Trajan, that the Romans made any serious progress on the Eastern front, and that was limited to western Persia. It was also rather short-lived, as the Parthians came back in force and recaptured all, and more of the contested lands. The conflict went on for centuries, and the Roman army was never able to effectively dominate the Eastern theater.

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Attributing Roman Coins

Attributing an ancient coin is a major source of enjoyment and satisfaction for most collectors. The first thoughts that race through the mind of anyone who finds an ancient coin loose in a junk box are: Who struck this coin? How old is it? How much is it worth? The answer to this last question is, for reasons discussed in volume I, beyond the scope of this work. But the first two questions are precisely what this chapter is all about. We will try here to make your search an adventure rather than a frustration. In the first volume of this series we briefly discussed the way that Roman coin inscriptions are formed and offered a "short list" of the more common abbreviations. This list will be expanded here, and we will also take a closer look at the actual process of attributing an ancient Roman coin.

The coins discussed in this volume are essentially those struck at the primary Republican and Imperial mints. Those Roman coins struck for use in specific provincial settings, commonly known as Roman Provincial coins, will be covered in a subsequent volume. Therefore, the legends on the coins discussed here will be rendered almost exclusively in Latin. During the Imperial Period, the ruler's name and political titles will typically be found on the obverse of a coin. Reading that name is usually the fastest and most reliable way to determine a coin's issuing authority. In volume I (pp. 103-105), we demonstrated how to read the inscription on a Roman coin. The only real "trick" to this is learning to recognize the names of rulers and separate them from the titles that run before and after them. Think of the inscription as an endless loop, find the name and cut it out. Then the titles become more or less obvious. A list of Roman emperors and their dates of reign is provided in Volume I—or one can reference the portrait gallery in this volume. The index on page 162 may also be useful, as it provides a handy alphabetical arrangement of emperors. The table of contents to this volume can also serve as a chronological list of emperors. For full names of the emperors, refer to the Condensed Genealogy at the end of each portrait section.

The initial step, however, requires recognition of the name when one sees it. This can only come with practice and patience. Try practicing this by reading the inscriptions on coins in books and sale catalogues, without looking at the captions. Sure, you will probably cheat—but so what? You will quickly learn the more common names, and this will help to develop a sense of where the titles begin and end. Knowing who is not on the coin is a good start toward knowing who is.

In 27 BC, Octavian was honored with the title "Augustus" which he accepted as his official name. From that point on, the emperor himself was referred to

as Augustus, the heir apparent was titled Caesar, and

imperial wives were often honored with the title Augusta. The titles used in a coin inscription can tell us whether the ruler was acting in the capacity of emperor, co-emperor or emperor presumptive. Another title which appears regularly on coins of the Roman Empire is Imperator. This

was not always equated with Emperor or Imperial, even though we tend to make them synonymous in our own vocabulary. Imperator was a venerable title awarded by acclamation, in the field, to victorious generals. It was awarded to Sulla, Pompey, Julius Caesar, Mark Antony and an assemblage of others, none of whom were "emperors". Numismatists refer to the coins of these Imperators, especially in Pre-Imperial times, as Imperatoritid. Nero bestowed the title Imperator upon himself, although he had never been in the field with an army—but that is just one more example of Roman propaganda. From about the time of Vespasian on, the title became associated exclusively with the emperor.

In any case, the title Imperator, usually abbreviated IMP, often begins the string of letters in a coin inscription. The title Augustus (emperor) usually falls at the end of the string. Thus, a simple inscription might read IMPSEVERUSPFAVG = Imperator (victorious general) Severus, Pius Felix (the dutiful) Augustus (emperor). Which Severus? Ah, you're catching on! This is where other inscriptions, portraits, denominations and reverse types come into play in making an attribution. For example, a bronze follis cannot be a coin of Septimius Severus, because the denomination had not been introduced until nearly a hundred years after his death. And, it could not be a coin of Libius Severus (Severus III), who ruled long after the decline of the follis. It could only be Severus II, who ruled during Diocletian's tetrarchy.

The title Imperator might be replaced with something more suited to the emperor's taste or the style of the time. For example, DNCONSTANTINUSPFAVG translates as Dominus Noster (of our lord), Constantinus (Constantine I), Pius Felix (the dutiful) Augustus (emperor). Sometimes the string of titles can be quite long, and full of abbreviations. Just be patient, and take them one at a time. It will all unravel before long.



FLVALCONSTANTINVSNOBC

FL(avius) VAL(erius) CONSTANTINVS NOB(ilissimus) C(aesar)
(Constantine I as Caesar)

Abbreviated Titles and Offices

AFR: Africanus (conqueror of Africa)

AVG: Augustus, (...ta) (title assumed by an emperor / em press)

ARM: Armeniacus (conqueror of Armenia)

BRIT: Britannicus (conqueror of Britain)

CAES: Caesar (designated heir)

CENS: Censor (magistrate who determined the size of the senate)

COS: Consul (one of two chief magistrates)

DAC: Dacicus (conqueror of Dacia)

DICT: Dictator (emergency office of supreme power for 6 months)

DIVI: Divine (acclaimed a deity)

DN: Dominus Noster ("of" our lord)

EX SC: "Accepted" by permission of the Senate

FIL: Filius/Filia (son or daughter of ...)

GERM: Germanicus (conqueror of Germany)

III VIR: Tresviri (one of the collegium monetales, i.e. moneyers)

IMP: Imperator (title reserved for victorious leaders/emperors)

IVN: Junior (the younger)

MED: Medicus (conqueror of Media)

NOB: Nobilissimus or [-ma=feminine] (noble)

OPT: Optimo Principi (the best prince)

PART: Parthicus (conqueror of Parthia)

PERP: Perpetuatae (for life)

PF: Pius Felix (dutiful)

PM: Pontifex Maximus (high priest)

PP: Pater Patriae (father of his country)

R: Rex (king)

SC: Senatus Consultus (with the permission of the Senate)

SPQR: Senatus Populusque Romanus (of the Senate and people of Rome)

TR POT: Tribunicia Potestate (Tribune of the People)

V C: Vir Clarissimus (most illustrious)

Note: Titles may be found in various stages of abbreviation. For example, "Tribunicia Potestas" is seen as TR P, TR POT, TRIB POT, TRIBUN POTES and others. "Nobilissimus Caesar" may appear as N C, NOB C, NOB CS, NOB CAES, NOBIL CAES, or NOBILISSIMUS CAES. Often, titles and names are abbreviated to the first letter of the word in order that more accolades can be added to the inscription. Doubling or tripling the last letter of an abbreviation, like CAES NN or AVGGG, indicates that there is more than one individual sharing the title—although this distinction is not reliable in the later empire.

The Roman Mint

One of the features of Roman culture and daily life that distinguished

it from that of the Greeks was an inclination to standardize. The Roman mint was a prime example of this trait. Throughout the Roman world, mints were operated under the strict control of the state bureaucracy. Because of this centralization—notwithstanding the needs and allowances of provincial government—procedures were relatively uniform. The provincial coinage of Rome, which provided a sort of parallel monetary system until the fourth century, forms a category unto itself and will be treated in the fourth volume of this series. Here, we will focus only on those imperial issues that follow the basic standards set at the central mints, first of Lugdunum and Rome and later of Constantinople (and a few Italian cities which served as temporary seats of government during the later days of the empire).

The identification of mint and workshop were important to effective control of the output and distribution of coins. Therefore, many Roman coins of the

Imperial Period bear mint control marks of some sort. Sometimes the mint name is simply abbreviated, and other times the producing mint is distinguished by more cryptic devices in the fields. Typical control marks include stars, dots, crescents, letters, numbers and the like. One hypothesis suggests that in later Roman coins the knotting arrangement of diadems worn by the emperor served as one form of mint control character.

Mint marks, as a part of the *exergue*, originated during the reforms of Diocletian (AD 284-304). They lasted through the reign of Anastasius (AD 491-518), who ruled the eastern empire at Constantinople. He is generally regarded by numismatists as the last Roman, and the first Roman or "Byzantine" emperor. In almost every case, the mint marks on Roman coins were abbreviated. Sometimes these abbreviations are easily deciphered, other times they can be a bit confusing. The ultimate resource in these situations is *Roman Imperial Coinage*, which lists every mint mark and device known at the time of publication—and there are a lot of them! There are a few cases of more than one city bearing the same abbreviation, but these are not contemporary occurrences and can be sorted out. Also a bit confusing to the beginning collector is the practice of adding abbreviated prefixes and suffixes to the mint name. These are quickly recognized after a time and do not generally create a problem.

The prefixes to a mint name, if any, will generally be M (*Moneta*=money), P (variously interpreted as *Pecunia*=money or *Percussa* = struck), S (*Signata* = struck at), and SM (*Signata Moneta*=money struck at...). The suffix usually consists of a letter/ number which signifies the branch or *officina* of the mint at which a

particular specimen was struck. But, just to spice up the game, the *officina* designation also can appear before the mint name. For example, we find mint marks like PTR and TRP at Treveri (Trier) or BSIRM and SIRMB at Sirmium. This situation is most common at western mints, where the *officina* prefixes P (*Prima*), S (*Secunda*), T (*Tertia*) and Q (*Quarta*) represent the numbers one through four.

Listed below are the most common Roman mints and their corresponding modern names. Mints seldom operated continuously throughout the long span of Roman history. Therefore, the coins of a particular ruler may not be found at one mint or another. Conversely, some rulers struck coins only at one mint, usually because they lacked political control of any other regions. Some coins were struck at mints which remain unknown to us, and sometimes coins were struck by travelling mints which moved from place to place with the emperor and his army. The discovery of a coin from a mint not previously known to strike coins for a particular ruler is usually a great contribution to historical

interpretation since the movements of these rulers and their sphere of influence can be tracked, by where coins were struck.

Roman mint cities and their modern names

ALEXANDRIA (Egypt)

AMBIANUM (Amiens, France)

ANTIOCH (Antakya, Turkey)

AQUILEIA (near Trieste, Italy)

ARELATE (Aries, France)

AVGVSTA TREVERORUM (Trier, Germany)

BARCINO (Barcelona, Spain)

CAMULODUNUM (Colchester, England)

CARTHAGE (near Tunis, Tunisia)

CLAUSENTIUM (?) (Bittern, Southampton, England)

CONSTANTINOPLE (Istanbul, Turkey)

CYZICUS (Kapu Dag, Turkey)

HERACLEA (Eregli, Turkey)

LUGDUNUM (Lyons, France)

LUNDINUM (London, England)

MEDIOLANUM (Milan, Italy)

NICOMEDIA (Izmit, Turkey)

OSTIA (port of Rome, Italy)

RAVENNA (Italy)

ROME (Italy)

ROTOMAGUS (Rouen, France)

SERDICA (Sophia, Bulgaria)

SIRMIUM (Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia)

SISCIA (Sisak, Croatia)

THESSALONICA (Salonika, Greece)

TICINUM (Pavia, Italy)

It is particularly useful to know the mint of issue if one is attempting to catalogue coins by RIC number. The arrangement of coins in that reference is by mint and date of issue, in that order. Similar types, especially of a generic nature, will often be found under a variety of mints and in a variety- of years. Trying to find a coin by looking through the obverse or reverse descriptions in RIC can be like looking for a needle in a haystack. For this purpose, the outdated but still useful, Cohen is preferable. Sear's Roman Coins and Their Values, often lists a particular mint, but the catalogue number is considered to apply to all mints striking that coin type.

Moneta was a name given to Juno as the goddess of good counsel (derived from moneo). Livy tells us that a temple was built to Juno Moneta on the Capitol ^nd attached to it was the mint. From this association came the term Moneta as a reference to money. The personification of Moneta typically holds a cornucopia and scales.



Constantius I, AEFollis

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Denominations

A standardization of denominations helped to facilitate trade within the wide sphere of Roman influence. From our perspective, we do not think of the ancients as mobile, since they weren't blessed (or cursed) with super highways and intercontinental air travel. It may have taken ancient travelers a bit longer to go from Britain to Egypt, but they did it nonetheless. Military and government officials, in particular, traveled extensively. Their journeys were often recorded in the voluminous archives and inscriptions that have survived. What these records reveal is a bureaucratic society that required and thrived on the reliability of standardization. A citizen of Rome could rely on the fact that his denarius would be accepted at face value anywhere in the Roman world.

The extent to which Roman coinage was used in daily commerce is a

subject which has been debated at some length. Some have argued that in ancient times coins were struck primarily to satisfy the needs of government. This was undoubtedly the case with certain issues, but the commonplace use of coins in daily life accounts for the majority of types and surviving specimens available to collectors today. Aside from the statistical analyses which indicate a massive issue of coinage, common sense would suggest that the Roman man on the street used coinage in much the same way that we do. In archaeological excavations, silver and bronze coins are commonly found along well travelled streets, beneath the seats of sports arenas, in known market areas and even in "wishing wells". The practice of tossing minor coinage into a pool for good luck (or to invoke the blessing of the gods, if you were a believer) dates back thousands of years. The excavation of an ancient spring or a bridge foundation is virtually sure to uncover an assortment of coins from different periods and sometimes even from more than one culture. If coinage were truly scarce in antiquity, it does not seem likely that we would find lost or discarded coins in these places.

The images on Roman coins were usually intended to convey a message or suggest a state of being. Although some openly appealed to the military for support, many of these narrative motifs were directed at the general public. This presumes, of course, that the public will be exposed to this propaganda. Also arguing for the widespread use of coinage in daily commerce is the extensive system of denominations that we encounter. These standardized and closely monitored units of value were designed for making change. One would have little need for change in commerce between nations or in payments to mercenaries, so the coins struck in these various denominations and fractional denominations must have been intended for use in daily life. The denominations changed in weight and in name throughout the course of time, so it is important in any discussion of the subject to establish the time frame.

The earliest "coins" of Rome were cast bronzes or lumps of metal of irregular size without any identifying stamp or mark of value. These

rude bronzes (Aes Rude) circulated from well before 500 BC down to the late fourth century and were exchanged by weight. Images were engraved into the molds for casting bronze bars which are called Aes natum, but the first circular cast coins with images were the Aes Grave

dating from ca. 289 BC. A complex series of cast bronze denominations was issued until near the end of the third century when struck bronzes were issued on a new "sextantal" standard. The earliest struck bronzes actually were issued not long after the introduction of the Aes Grave. Crawford places a struck bronze with Goddess/Lion and the inscription ROMANO at 275 BC. The cast

and struck bronzes were issued concurrently throughout most of the century.

Silver didrachms and drachms were struck as early as 280 BC. Later types of these denominations are referred to as the quadrigatus and the victoriatus due to the designs on their reverses. The Second Punic War caused such a strain on the Roman economy that the monetary system collapsed in 215. This led to the introduction of the denarius, and a related gold series which was financed by booty from the sack of Syracuse. The denarius became the main silver coin of the later republic and of the early imperial period. This mainstay of the monetary system served the Romans well for some five hundred years.

However, by the middle of the third century AD, the denarius was debased to the point that it was actually a bronze coin. During the reign of Caracalla (in AD 214) the new double denarius or antoninianus was added (Caracalla was a nickname meaning "little boot", his formal name was Antoninus, after which the denomination was named). This denomination was originally a coin of high silver content, but not long after its inception a period of devastating inflation turned it too into a very debased shell of its former existence.

Antoniniani of the later third century contain a very low percentage of silver, and in some cases no silver at all. The early issues are usually referred to in the trade as AR antoninianus, debased issues are merely referred to as Antoninianus, and those late issues containing no silver are referred to as AE antoninianus.

There are some differences of opinion as to how these coins were made. One study has concluded that through normal chemical reactions silver tends to migrate to the surface of a coin, enriching the surface over time. In the case of a low silver content coin this may result in a "plated" appearance. It is not unusual to find surface traces of silver on debased antoniniani and on some of the folks of the Tetrarchy or Constantinian era. Other studies (see bibliography) have concluded that these coins were washed in silver during production to give them a silvery appearance. Incidentally, the plural form of denarius, antoninianus and aureus (and other denominations ending in ...us) is derived by sub-

stituting an "i" for the final "us" of the word. I'luis, the plural of denarius is denarii; of antoninianus is antoniniani; mu\ of aureus is aurei.

Gold denominations (aureus and solidus), mu\ their fractions (qui-nanus = 1/2 aureus, semissis = 1/2 solidus and tremissis = 1/3 solidus), were undoubtedly used in commerce as well, but in some periods were of such a relatively high value that they would have been difficult for humble merchants to exchange. Bronze coins were the mainstay of the daily market and even large sums of money were reckoned in sestertii — although probably paid in silver or gold. The smallest practical unit of exchange in the early empire seems to have

been the as, even though smaller denominations like the semis and quadrans, were issued from time to time. The dupondius was tariffed at twice the value of an as, and from the time of Nero was distinguished by a radiate crown on the emperor—as was the later antoninianus. On coins of this period honoring female subjects, a crescent was placed below the portrait to identify these double" denominations. Under the monetary reform of Diocletian, about AD 286, the new denominations oiangenteus and follis were added. More new denominations were introduced by Constantine the Great, including the siliqua and miliarensis in silver and a series of smaller bronze coins which today are catalogued by numismatists according to their diameter. There were several multiple and fractional denominations that are not mentioned above, all of which are quite scarce. This may suggest that they were issued in commemoration of special occasions or for other purposes besides routine distribution and commerce.

In the later days of the empire, bronze coinage became severely reduced in size and tiny "minima" were issued in huge numbers. From a collector's point of view, these coins are challenging, because they seldom retain any recognizable inscription or attributable features. It was not until the reign of Anastasius (AD 491-518) that bronze once again assumed an important role in commerce.

On the following pages are some simplified tables of denominational relationships in the periods of the republic, early empire and late empire. The relative value index (RVI) to coins of the later republic and the empire is calculated with the silver denarius and argenteus as base units (1). Denominations physically listed above the base unit will reflect the fraction of that denomination to the base. Denominations listed below will reflect the multiple of the base represented by that denomination. Weights and diameters of these denominations can vary greatly from one period to another. This may be due to official debasements like that under Nero, which saw the denarius fall in weight about 10% and in fineness about 4%. Under Septimius Severus the denarius fell to about 50% silver. Changes were not always negative, some monetary reforms reestablished an earlier weight standard or introduced a new standard of improved weight or precious metal content. Weight will also vary according to the state of preservation of a specimen.

Early Republican Cast Coinage before ca. 211 BC

Denomination Metal

RVI

Aes Grave, as bronze

Aes C Irave, semis bronze

Aes Grave, triens bronze

Aes Grave, quadrans bronze

Aes Grave, sextans bronze

Aes Grave, uncia bronze

Aes Grave, semiuncia bronze

Aes Rude bronze

(D*

(1/2)

(1/3)

(1/4)

0/6)

(1/12)

(1/24)

by weight

based on the Aes Grave as, declining from one Roman pound or 324 gm.



Aes Grave uncia, ca. 269-240 BC, 16.71 gm Obverse and Reverse: Astralogos (knucklebone)



Aes Grave as, ca. 240-225 BC, 251.52 gm Obverse: Head of Janus, Reverse: Prow of ship

18

Early Republican Struck Coinage before ca. 211 BC

Denomination Metal

RVI



AE hemilitra 234-231 BC

AR quadrigatus (didrachm) ca. 225-212 BC



AE uncia, 217-215 BC

AR didrachm 230-226 BC



AE triens, 215-212 BC

Table of Denominations Roman Republic after ca. 211 BC

Denomination Metal

RVI

"Based on the silver denarius of approximately 4.5 grams, the contemporary victoriatus weighing somewhat less. The denarius was retariffed from 10 asses to 16 asses in about 141 BC (see illustrations below).

**The aureus was first struck by Sulla in about 83 BC at a weight of over 10.5 grams (about three times as heavy as the earlier 60 as gold piece). The calculated RVI of 25 is against the retariffed denarius of 16 asses.

Rarely used denomination included the decussis, quincussis, tressis, dextans, dodrans, bes, quincunx and quartuncia.



C. Maianus AR denarius (x1.5) 153 BC(X=10 asses)



L. Atilius Nomentanns

AR denarius (x1.5) 141 BC(XVI=16 asses)

20



AE as, ca. 209-208 BC



AE semis, after 211 BC



AV20as(x2),after211BC AR sestertius, after 211 BC





AR quinarius 211-210 BC (V=5 asses)



Anonymous, AE triens

after 211 BC

(4 pellets = 4 uncia= 1/3 as)



AE quadrans, after 211 BC



AR victoriat, 211-208 BC

AE uncia, after 211

in

AE semiuncia, after 211 BC



Table of Denominations Roman Empire after ca. AD 296

Denomination Metal

RVI

'based on the silver argenteus of approximately 3.0 grams and the later siliqua of about the same weight. The centenionalis, introduced in AD 348, seems to have been tarified at 100 of the greatly devalued AE denarii. The relationship of later bronze coins (AE-1 to AE-4) to contemporary silver is uncertain, and was probably not fixed in any meaningful way.

The last Roman bronze



Zcno, AD 474-491, AE 40 mimmi

The selection of Anastasius as the last "Roman" emperor (from the numismatic perspective) is an artificial determination stemming from the coinage reform of his reign which occurred about 498. This chronological benchmark fits neatly into the historical background of Constantinople, but that of the West is much more confused. The rare type illustrated above was struck at Rome, controlled at that time by the Ostrogoths, and prefigures the reform of Anastasius by introducing a large bronze coin of the 40 nummi denomination. The reason for its issue is unknown, but it is clear from the style and the legends that this issue was meant to emulate the coinage of an earlier empire which once ruled the world.

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Dating Roman Coins

The dating of Roman coins by issuing authority, that is the span of years during which a moneyer was empowered or an emperor reigned, is common practice. A coin of Constantine the Great will typically be dated AD 307-337. Of course Constantine would not have known this, because the calendar which we use to reckon those dates had not been invented in his time. Many issues can be dated more precisely than to this general span of years. Within the legends of Roman coins we often find references to special titles held by the issuing authority. This recording of military, governmental or religious titles is particularly useful in the dating of coins. Perhaps the most useful of these are the offices of *Tribunicia Potestas* (People's Tribune) and the *Consulship*. Fortunately, surviving inscriptions and centuries of historical sleuthing have provided us with an excellent record of the dates in which these titles were conferred or claimed.

The emperor Nero, for example, received the tribunician power on December 9, AD 54. It was renewed on that day each succeeding year. Therefore a coin inscribed TRP V would have been struck sometime between December 9, AD 58 and December 8, AD 59. Consequently, one will often see the date for this issue recorded as AD 58/59. The slash mark between the two dates indicates that the period of consideration occurred in part of the first year and part of the following year. This is in contrast to hyphenated dates, which normally indicate the beginning and end of a term or cycle. Nero also was designated Consul in the years 55, 57, 58, 60 and 68. These consular titles were reflected

on coinage as COS I, II, III, etc. A coin inscribed COS III would therefore be datable to AD 58. This form of dating is useful from Republican times until about AD 270, after which the consulships are no longer indicated sequentially on coinage.

Other titles which were recorded on coins, and for which we sometimes have literary cross-references, are Imperator (used to record the sequential victories of a commander—usually the emperor) and Pontifex Maximus (designation as High Priest). Starting during the reign of Septimius Severus, the year of tribunician power runs from January 1 to December 31—eliminating the overlap of years. Specific titles relating to victories were also awarded in identifiable dates. Some of these were Africanus, Armeniacus, Britannicus, Dacicus, Germanicus, Parthicus, etc.

The propensity of Roman emperors to record these titles on their coins has been a great aid to our interpretation of historical events and to the chronological placement of coin types in a series.

The Roman Consulship

The office of Consul was created in 509 BC and replaced the supreme authority of the earlier kings. It was an extremely important position, originally bestowed by the Roman Senate on two elected members each year. These consuls were equal in authority and alternated their several duties between them every other month. Their functions under the Republic were mainly political and administrative, but these powers were lost during the Civil Wars and under the Principate the position became mostly ceremonial. During the imperial period, the consul (usually the emperor) was responsible for the giving of public games and for the distribution of gifts to the public.

The consul wore a distinctive purple cloth robe called a trabea which was interwoven with threads of gold and adorned with precious stones. Two other distinctive symbols of the consular office were the scepter and the mappa. The scepter was a general and very ancient symbol of authority. The mappa was a cloth table-napkin, used by the Romans much like they are used today. It was not unusual for a guest to bring his own mappa to a dinner and carry off excess morsels that were not consumed. Ceremonially, the mappa was thrown into the arena by the consul as a signal for the games to start. Only the emperor was allowed to place his portrait on coins alluding to the consulship, and a number of imperial issues feature the emperor in consular dress. This was particularly a feature of later Roman and early Byzantine coinage. On these coins, the symbols of office mentioned above are usually easy to recognize. During the later imperial period, the consulate was divided

between the capitals of the West and the East. The former came to an end in AD 534 and the latter in AD 541 when the Eastern emperor was proclaimed Consul Perpetuus.

Fortunately, consuls liked to advertise their tenure. The historical record has been blessed with countless inscriptions and official lists which give a fairly complete picture of the individuals who served in this office. These lists have been distilled for the numismatist and may be found in RIC as well as in chronologies like Scarre (see bibliography). We have included a few typical rulers here, just for illustration, and refer the collector to a more comprehensive work for detailed information.



Valentinian I & Valens AD368, AV solidus



Leo I as Consul AD 466, AV solidus



Zeno as Consul AD 479, AV solidus

Sample list of Imperial Consulships

Ruler	Year	COS
Il	Il	Il
Trajan		
Commodus		
Caracalla		

70

72

74

75

76

77

79

80

98

100

101

103

112

177

179

181

183

186

190

192

202

205

208

213

I

II III

V

VI

VII

VIII

II III mi v

VI

i ii

in

III

V VI VII

I

II III III

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The methodology of Roman coin collecting

The most common method of collecting Roman coins is to assemble a set of the emperor's portraits. This approach is natural, and seems familiar to converts from the field of modern World or U.S. coin collecting.

Unfortunately there were a lot of emperors and several of them are rare to the point of being unobtainable.

A more modest approach is to collect coins issued by a particular category of emperors. Some of the popular categories include coins struck by:

- the Julio-Claudians
- the Flavians
- the Adoptive Emperors
- the Severan dynasty
- the Gallic emperors
- the Military Emperors
- the Tetrarchy
- Constantine and his family

One of the most popular categories of Roman portrait collecting is that of the Twelve Caesars. Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus was born about AD 69 and lived until about AD 140. During his career he served the emperor Hadrian as chief secretary, but was dismissed for behaving badly to the emperor's wife Sabina. He was a prolific writer and produced some 17 works on a variety of subjects about Roman life. Only fragments of *Illustrious Writers* and the entire *Twelve Caesars* have survived. It is our good fortune that the latter title has been preserved because it is the richest of all the Latin histories. Suetonius unabashedly tells the story of twelve rulers, from Julius Caesar through Domitian, and weaves a tale of intrigue and horror as well as power and glory. He also gives us a firsthand glimpse into the lives of famous Romans. The main criticism of Suetonius is that he tends to relate incredulous tales as fact, without weighing the evidence. Nevertheless, his work is a classic among antiquarians and the *Twelve Caesars* have become immortal through his pen.

In volume I we discussed topical collecting, and it will not be necessary to elaborate on that here, except to say that Roman coins are much more specific in their iconography than Greek coins, and therefore, not quite as suitable for

the collecting of general motifs like gods, ships, plants, animals, vases, etc. etc. Roman coins tend to lead one more deeply into the sociopolitical fabric of their culture. Roman imagery tends to burst with allegorical allusion, and the collector is inevitably drawn into a fascinating series of discoveries before the intent of the Image becomes clear. The methodology of collecting Roman coins is then a bit different than that of collecting Greek coins. Inscriptions play a very important role in the persona of a Roman coin. Aside from a few Hellenistic coins, that is not typically the case with the Greek.

One often finds that Roman coins lead to a craving for detailed information about a person or event. Anniversaries and festivals were an important part of the social life of Rome. These lavish events were held in huge edifices, dedicated to the people, and were boasted of in coinage. Another feature of Roman coinage that seems to draw more intense scrutiny is mint organization and production. The output of Roman mints tells us a great deal about the politics of the period. Although the coins struck in the name of Alexander the Great were issued from many more mints than the Romans ever operated, they seldom provide the same kind of detailed information about military or political events.

Since the rise of the Roman Empire and the rise of Christianity are parallel events, there are many references to Christianity on Roman coins. This makes a popular topical area. Two topical areas of particular interest to collectors of both Greek and Roman coins, Architecture and Astrology, are presented on pages 174 to 178.

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Reference works for the collector

there are several different types of reference works which will be of

value to the collector of Roman coins. Among the most useful are those which serve as aids to attribution. Catalogues to important collections have been compiled since the early days of the Renaissance. Some of these have been quite impressive, and many are annotated, but all share the same shortcoming—they do not cover the entire scope of Roman coinage. The general catalogue or corpus of known types is much more valuable to the collector who wishes to identify an elusive specimen. Instead of foraging through collection catalogues, one after another, one can find most of the known coins in a major reference work like Cohen, RICorBMC. You haven't heard of these? Well, you won't be collecting Roman coins long before these major references will probably become familiar friends. These references are not listed in the section bibliographies throughout this book because they would be terribly repetitious. Here is a brief synopsis of each just to give you an idea what's ahead.

CRAWFORD: Roman Republican Coinage, the standard guide to attributing coins of that era was written by Michael H. Crawford, Lecturer in Ancient History at the University of Cambridge. This comprehensive two-volume catalog includes a valuable introduction with discussions about the manufacture, tariffing and distribution of the coins, the lives of the moneyers, and the significance of the types employed. It replaces the earlier work by Sydenham, but that reference is still used by some because it is concise and available in an inexpensive reprint.

COHEN: Henri Cohen (1806-1880) was librarian at the Cabinet des Medailles in Paris—the home of the French national coin collection. Between 1859 and 1868 he produced *Description Historique des Monnaies Frappees sous l'Empire Romain*, an eight volume catalogue of Roman Imperial coins. This work, while criticized by contemporaries as not very scholarly, was actually a boon to collectors. The simple arrangement, first by emperor and then by reverse inscription in alphabetical order, made universal reference to a coin easy. To this day, one will still on occasion see Cohen numbers used as references in dealer lists and auction catalogues. One should remember that Cohen's numbers start over with each new emperor (like regnal dates) so there will be quite a few different C.1's or C.2's. Since it was produced before photographs were a viable option, the work is illustrated with line drawings. This adds a certain charm that makes it all the more enjoyable to use. Naturally, some of the attributions are in error. Any ancient coin reference which has survived, unchanged, for over a century will need to be consulted with great care. Original editions of Cohen are rare and expensive, but there have been at least two reprints which are usable and more practi-

cal. The text of this work is in French, but in 1957 a supplement was added to the reprint by Akademische Druck in Graz, Austria. This supplement translates numismatic words and phrases from French into German, English, Italian and Spanish. It is not only a useful addition to Cohen's work, it is a wonderful aid for numismatists in general. Cohen should not be one's only reference on Roman coins, but it is still a useful and handy tool in spite of its age.

RIC: This is an abbreviation for the ten volume catalogue of The

Roman Imperial Coinage produced in London from 1923 to 1994 by some of Britain's leading Roman specialists. RIC is the ultimate reference for Roman Imperial coins and will be a necessary acquisition for the serious collector. The series is organized by emperor (or groups thereof), so it is not necessary to acquire the entire set if one specializes only in a specific period. Recent printings have brought them all back in print except volume V, which is under revision. RIC is a compilation of all known varieties in museums and private collections accessible to the authors. It is arranged by mint, and date of issue, which makes it difficult at times to find a particular variety. With practice, however, it does become easier. As a guide to the precise dating of a coin, RIC is unsurpassed, and its introductions contain much detailed information about minting and distribution.

SEAR ROMAN: Roman Coins and Their Values, London, 1988, is the basic attribution guide that has launched many a collector and professional numismatist. It is not a comprehensive listing of types, but most of the more commonly found Roman coins are included. This is the most useful guide that has ever been written for the beginning collector of Roman coins. It has been reprinted numerous times, and a copy (usually well worn from use) will be found in virtually every numismatic library in the world. Organized chronologically, and by denomination, Sear Roman identifies 4,412 coins in a single desktop reference. Consequently, even seasoned collectors and dealers turn to it for ready reference. Many dealers reference their stock by Sear number because so many of their customers have the guide in their own libraries. It is a must, regardless of one's level of collecting.

BMC: The Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, London, 1932-1962, has essentially been superseded by RIC. It is a catalogue of the holdings of the museum, which are extensive but not complete.

For an informative article about the history of numismatic reference works see Douglas Saville's article "The Roman Imperial Coinage: The history of a remarkable series" in *The Celator*, August 1994, pp. 34-38. The ultimate review of ancient coin references is Dennis Kroh's *Ancient Coin Reference Review*, published at Winter Park, Florida, 1993.

Chronological tabic of Ancient Sources

The following list does no! include the many poets, philosophers and theologians who wrote in ancient times. Although they also shed light on the period, and sometimes on specific events, this list would become extensive if they were to be added. It is intended only as a condensed guide to ancient sources which may be useful to the numismatist studying Roman history.

t 149 BC Cato — History of Rome

ca. 120 BC Polybius — Roman History, 264-144 BC

ca. 51 BC Caesar — De Bello Gallico

119 BC Virgil— The Aeneid (unfinished)

t AD 14 Augustus — Res Gestae Divi Augusti

t17 Livy — History of Rome

t 21 Strabo — Geography

t 99 Pliny the Elder — Historia Naturalis

ca. 100 Josephus — History of the Jewish Wars

t ca. 102 Martial — Epigrams

t 117 Tacitus — Agricola, Histories, Annates

t120 Plutarch — Lives

ca. 140 Suetonius — De Vita Caesarum (The Twelve Caesars)

ca. 150 Appian — Roman history to the reign of Trajan

ca. 229 Dio Cassius — Historia Romana

ca. 250 Herodian — History (180-238)

324 Porphyrius — panegyric of Constantine

t ca. 340 Eusebius — Vita Constantini

ca. 364 Eutropius — Roman History to 364

361 Julian the Apostate — Speeches, letters

- ca. 391 Symmachus — Roman Consul (speeches)
- tea. 395 Ammianus Marcellinus — History, AD 95-378
- 395 "Notitia Dignitatum" — List of Roman officials
- ca. 400 "Historia Augusta" - History, AD 117-284
- ca. 400 Macrobius — Saturnalia
- t ca. 404 Claudian — panegyric of Honorius
- 410 R. Profuturus Frigeridus — Alaric's sack of Rome
- 425 Olympiodorus — History, AD 4Q7A25
- 438 Theodosius II — Codex Theodosianus (law)
- t 466 Theodoret — Church History to AD 428
- t ca. 472 Priscus — History, AD 433-472
- tea. 484 Euric — Codex Euricianus (law)
- ca. 484 Victor of Vita — History of African Persecution
- ca. 500 Zosimus — New History (Augustus to AD 410)

Coinage of the Roman Republic

When hearing the name "Koine", one thinks Immediately about the

Empire, from its founding in 27 BC to its demise in AD 476. I lowv\vr, this is less than half the story. The Roman Republic was founded in ^0 C > BC, and its history is every bit as Fascinating as that o\ the I mpuv. I he early coinage of the Roman Republic is discussed briefly in the prei i ous section about "denominations", but coinage oi the second and first centuries is especially rich in political, religious ^md historical themes. Because the histories of the period are not as detailed, nor as precise, as those written during the Imperial period it lias fallen to numismatists to develop a chronology of the period. This has been a subject of great debate, thorough investigation, constant dialogue ,md brilliant sleuthing. Recent studies have also benefitted from the examination of large hoards not available to earlier scholars. It should suffice to say that the dating arrangements in works of more than a decade or two in age are now quite inaccurate. Aside from this disparity, older works often have much interpretive information to share and are still worth consulting.

One of the more perplexing aspects of Republican coinage is the relationship of denominations. Overlapping standards, changing denominations, and radical weight reductions have left us with a complex puzzle. It is not possible to cover the field of Roman Republican coinage in the few pages available here, but we can at least illustrate some of the many interesting types and hopefully provide the impetus for exploration into this field through more specialized works.

Many of the denarii struck during the late second century, through the middle of the first century BC, were propagandistic in the sense that they heralded family accomplishments and bolstered the legitimacy of political aspirants. A coin from the year, 48 BC, depicts the woolly portrait of Vercingetorix—the chieftain of the Arverni in Gaul, who opposed Julius Caesar with remarkable skill. He was eventually captured, and taken to Rome where he was paraded during Caesar's triumph. The

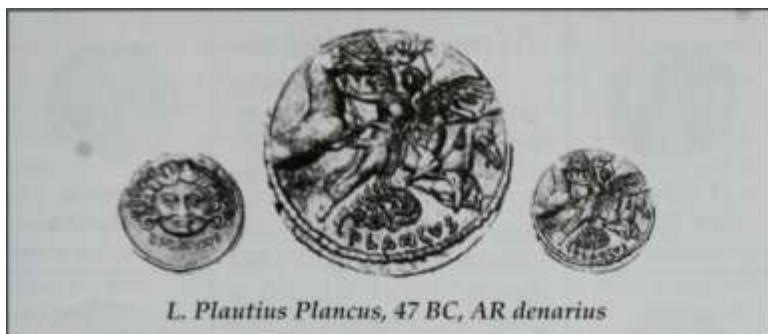
historic aspects of this type are enormous. Caesar's seventh book of *The Gallic Wars* is dedicated entirely to this campaign. The execution of this stunning portrait, which embodies the entire character of a nation, is equally remarkable. The moneyer, L. Hostilius Saserna, was a Caesarian and the depiction of Vercingetorix on this coin type was clearly a propagandistic statement on Caesar's behalf.



L. Hostilius Saserna, 48 BC

AR denarius (x1.5)

Portrait of Vercingetorix



One of the many interesting types that may be seen during this period is the denarius of L. Plautius Plancus, who served as moneyer in 47 BC. According to Pliny, the brother of this official, one L. Munatius Plancus, had dedicated in the Capitol a painting by the famed Nichomachus. This work portrayed Victory, leading a quadriga. Among the aristocracy of Rome, this would have been a notable event which brought honor to the Plancus family. When Plautius required an image to adorn the denarii struck during his tenure, he chose the scene from this painting. It is one of the very few occasions where the detail of an ancient painting survives.

T. Carisius was apparently proud of his appointment as moneyer, since he placed on his denarius a scene from the mint. The anvil, a punch die, hammer and tongs reflect the tools that were used to strike coins in the days of the Romans. Coin production was both an art and a science, and responsibility for the production of Roman coinage was a great honor to the family of the moneyer. In this design, the tools are surrounded by a wreath, which serves in tribute. As can be seen from just these few examples, the iconography of Roman coins during the later Republic is quite different from that of the earliest period of Republican coinage. The orientation shifted from a focus on gods to a focus on people. It became even more anthropocentric in the Imperial and Imperial periods. Finally, the emperors became gods themselves. This was the climate during the rise of Christianity, a period when the pagan gods lost their sway over the minds of men. The cultural changes were slow, but consistent, and they may be traced with interest through the coinage of this epoch.



T. Carisius, 46 BC, AR denarius die, anvil, hammer and tongs



Calliope Epic Poetry



Clio History



Erato Love Poetry



Euterpe Lyric Poetry



Melpomene Tragedy

Musa & Muses

One of the most delightful "sets" of coinage struck under Republican moneyers was the series of Muses designed for denarii of Q. Pomponius Musa. The Muses were female personifications of the arts and sciences which originated in Greek mythology—the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (memory). Their patron was Apollo, whose head is featured on the obverse of each coin in this series. Their leader Hercules is depicted on the tenth coin of the set.

These coins were struck in 56 BC, while Musa was *tresviri monetales*. He was descended from Numa Pompilius, the leg-endar-y Sabine king who added January and February to the calendar. Puns on a family or city name were popular during this period, but none match the spectacle of this pun on Musa's name. Each of the Muses is depicted with her own special attribute: Calliope: lyre on pedestal Clio: scroll

Erato: freestanding lyre Euterpe: pedestal / flutes Melpomene: club, tragic mask Polymnia: wreath Terpsichore: lyre / plectrum Thalia: comic mask Urania: rod and globe See: Arthur J. Frank, "Musa's Muses: The Muse Denarii of Q. Pomponius Musa", *SAN XI* / 4, 1980-81, pp. 68-70.



Polymniu Rhetoric



Terpsichore Dance



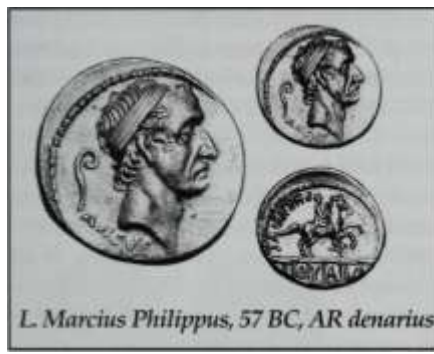
Thalia Comedy



Urania Astronomy

When L. Marcius Philippus became moneyer in 57 BQ he chose to honor on his coins the memory of his ancestor Ancus Marcius, the fourth King of Rome. Another ancestor; O. Maivius Rex, was responsible for building the Aqua Maivia, which provided fresh water to the city of Rome. Beside a veristic portrait we find the name Ancus. On the reverse we see the aqueduct. At the time of this issue, it was unheard of for a Roman to place his own likeness on a coin of the Republic. That was still considered a monarchical act and therefore treasonous. However a number of moneyers had placed images of their ancestors on coinage—which seems to have been acceptable. It has been suggested that this moneyer, in placing the portrait of Ancus on his coins, actually

endowed the ancestor with his own features—sort of reverse heredity! If so, this would be one of the earliest, if not the earliest portrait of a living person on a Roman coin. The gold portrait stater issued in Greece by the Roman general T. Quinctius Flamininus, about 196 BC, was a Hellenistic coin, not Roman.



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Imperial Coinage

The term "Imperial", mentioned earlier on page nine, is really

vague. It is a commonly used term, but few sources attempt to define it. As an adjective/ the word means simply "of a supreme commander or emperor".

Thus, one would think that all Imperial coins would include in their legends a reference to the [imperator] being honored. In fact, they do not. For

example, among the popular coins of Julius Caesar, neither the "Anchises" nor "Elephant" varieties bear any reference to his title as Emperor. Neither does the denarius of Caius Antonius (brother of Mark Antony) struck in Macedon. Nor does the famous denarius of Antony and Cleopatra. Still, these coins are always catalogued as Imperial coins. By common practice, the term is used to describe all of those coins issued by generals (Emperors) who did not obtain the permission of the Senate to do so—regardless of whether the title Emperor appears on the coin itself.

Imperial Coins generally fall within a chronological window between the death of Sulla and the accession of Augustus. But beware, not all coins of this period are Imperial. An extensive series of contemporary coins, struck by Senate appointed moneyers, has nothing at all to do with an emperor or the concept of imperium. Politically, this entire period is a sea of confusion. Numismatically, it is not all that clear either. Many coins of this period are universally classified as Republican and others, for no immediately apparent reason, are classified Imperial. Sutherland (Roman Coins) referred to all of them as "Republican". Numismatic authors in general hedge around the term because it is so very ambiguous. The best that we can say, is that Imperial coins are transitional bridges between coinage of the Republican and Imperial forms of government.

Surprisingly, there is not a numismatic "bible" for Imperial coins. Notice that among the references listed in our bibliography the word itself does not appear. The word does not appear in Crawford's index, although Imperium does. Nor does it appear in Sydenham's work, although Emperor does. David Sear (Roman Coins and their Values) includes a section of "Imperial" coins, but none of his listed references refer to the coins by that name. Collectors who wish to specialize in this period of Roman history will find references mainly at the end of books about Republican coins or in articles written for periodicals. They are likely to form their own criteria for including or excluding particular types. The coins of those personalities discussed on the following pages are typical, but not inclusive, of the coinage commonly referred to as Imperial.

Pompey the Great

Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, Pompey the Great was born in 106 BC

and reached a position of great power through his military successes in Africa, Spain and Asia. His military career began at the age of 17, when

in 83 he was saluted Emperor by Sulla for his successes against the Marian forces. Subduing Sicily and Africa, he was honored with a Triumph in Rome and the

title "Magnus" at the extraordinary age of 24.

Pompey spent si\ years in Spain, and finally quieted that province. On the return to Rome, he encountered the remnants of the army of Spartacus—which he annihilated and for which he claimed the credit of ending the Servile War. He was elected Consul in 70 BC, although pos-- SSJ :ig none of the prerequisites. Pompey was extremely popular among the common people, as was Caesar, and they became political allies.

Later, he is credited with clearing the Mediterranean of Pirates, operating mainly out oi Cilicia, which was a particularly thorny task. He also brought the war against Mithridates of Pontus to a conclusion. Pompey was allied with Caesar in the First Triumvirate, but opposed

him in the Civil War, and was defeated by Caesar's forces at Pharsa-lus. Retreating to Egypt, he was murdered at Alexandria.

None of the coins struck by Pompey bear his own image. Fortunately, those struck for his sons Cnaeus Pompey Junior and Sextus Pompey provide some wonderful numismatic portraits of one of Rome's most successful generals.



Cn. Pompey Jr., 46-45 BC

AR denarius

Hispania presenting palm

to Pompey



Pompey the Great as Neptune AR denarius (x2), issued in 44/43 BC by his son Sextus Pompey

Julius Caesar



Julius Caesar, 44 BC AR denarius (x2)

Caius Julius Caesar was born in 100 BC to an aristocratic Roman family. He was an opponent of Sulla, and formed the first Triumvirate with Pompey and Crassus. The ensuing Civil War, with defeat of the Pompeian party left Caesar eventually in command of the entire Roman world. In 44 BC, the Roman Senate bestowed upon Caesar the right to place his own image on state coinage. He was also honored with the title Dictator Perpetuo, or dictator for life. The portrait illustrated here shows Caesar crowned and veiled. The crown represents his triumphs and the veil his religious office as Pontifex Maximus. The reverse of this and other of Caesar's issues honors Venus, a claimed ancestress of the Julian family. Ironically, his hard won authority and absolute power was short lived. On the 15th of March (The Ides) 44 BC Caesar was assassinated on the steps of the Roman Senate by a conspiracy of his friends and colleagues. Following his death, a number of posthumous portrait coins were struck by admirers of Caesar.

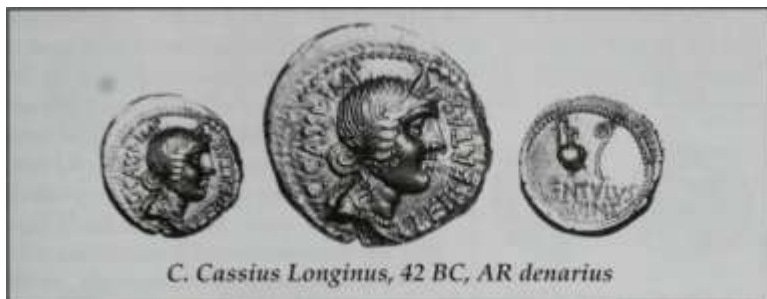
One of the most popular coins in today's collector market is the denarius issued by Caesar with the depiction of an elephant trampling a serpent. This coin was issued in 49/48 BC after Caesar crossed the Rubicon in defiance of the Roman Senate. It was issued in large quantities to pay the troops under his command, and is therefore one of the most common types (as well as the first) to bear the name Caesar. It has been speculated that the obverse scene represents the triumph of good over evil. On the reverse are the priestly instruments of the Pontifex Maximus.

tm



Julius Caesar, 49-48 BC, AR denarius (xl.5) mint travelling with Caesar

The Assassins



M. Junius Brutus, 43-42 BC AR denarius (xl.5)



M. Junius Brutus, 54 BC AR denarius

Gaius Cassius Longinus served as one of Caesar's lieutenants and is said to have been the instigator of Caesar's assassination. He then joined Brutus in the East and was defeated at the battle of Philippi— where he committed suicide. The most famous coin of the infamous Brutus, is the "Eid Mar" denarius (see obv. here, rev. on p.181). This is a rare and highly prized collectible. Another coin, struck for Brutus a decade before the murder of Caesar (an ancestral type) is not nearly so difficult to obtain. Brutus also appears in name on a coin honoring P. Servilius Casca Longus, the general of Brutus who was the first to plunge his dagger into Caesar.



M. Junius Brutus and P. Servilius Casca Longus 43-42 BC, AR denarius (x1.5)

Imperial Potpourri



Caius Antonius, 43 BC

AR denarius (Macedonia)

brother of Mark Antony

The coins struck for Mark Antony add up to a sizable number, and include pieces honoring his son, brother Lucius, wives, and a host of legions (see page 42). In Macedonia, another brother of Antony, by the

name of Caius Antonius, struck coins under his own authority. Caius had been appointed Praetor of Macedonia, and after the death of Caesar gave that province to Antony. His coins, which are fairly rare, bear a personification of Macedonia on the obverse and priestly implements on the reverse. Caius was slain by Brutus prior to the battle of Philippi—apparently in retaliation for the execution of his brother's personal enemy, Cicero.

Cnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus was

a member of the Pompeian party during

the Civil War, but was pardoned by Ju-

lius Caesar. After Caesar's death he joined

the forces of Brutus and Cassius in Macedonia and won an important naval battle on the day of the Battle of Philippi. He was saluted Imperator by his troops for this victory. It was to no avail, however, as the land forces were defeated. Ahenobarbus turned for a while to Piracy, and then joined the forces of Antony, his former enemy. Before the Battle of Actium, he switched allegiance to Octavian.

Cnaeus Domitius Calvinus was an influential Senator who served as Consul in 53 BC. He supported Julius Caesar in the Civil War, and the Second Triumvirate of Antony, Octavian and Lepidus after Caesar's death. In 39 BC, Octavian appointed Calvinus to the post of Proconsul in Spain. There, he was saluted Imperator for victories against the Cerretani. The denarius illustrated

here, commemorates those victories. Its obverse is modelled on the earlier Celtiberian coinage of Osca with a bearded figure (not Calvinus). A distinctly Roman reverse features the sacrificial implements of the high priest.



Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus 41 BC, AV aureus (x1.5)



Cn. Domitius Calvinus 39 BC, AR denarius

40

The Second Triumvirate



Antony and Octavian

AR denarius, ca. 41 BC

<m



The power that Caesar wielded in 44 BC was coveted by many, but three main claimants emerged after

the assassins had fled from Rome. They were Caesar's great-nephew and heir, Octavian; his Cavalry commander and Tribune of the People, Mark Antony and the general Lepidus, who was consul in 46 BC along with Caesar. None of the three being powerful enough to dominate the other two, they formed the Second Triumvirate—which was modelled after the earlier triumvirate of Caesar, Pompey and Crassus. In forming this rather unholy union, the enemies of each were added to a proscription list—which according to Plutarch ended in the slaughter of 2,300 of Rome's best senators and knights, including

Cicero.

Lepidus was to govern Africa, but attempted to annex Sicily for himself and was subsequently stripped of all power. Not considered a threat at this point, he was left to serve as Pontifex Maximus—a strictly religious role. Neither Antony nor Octavian was content to share power, and the friction grew until they finally met at the fateful battle at Actium in western Greece. Due to brilliant maneuvering by Octavian's general, Agrippa, the fleet of Antony and Cleopatra was unexpectedly trapped without an escape route inside the bay where they were marshalling. As a result, they were unable to form an effective defense and sustained major losses. Retreating from the battlefield with his wife Cleopatra, Antony fled to Egypt. Having abandoned any hope of recovery, he committed suicide at Alexandria in 30 BC. This left Octavian alone as master of the Roman world.

Lepidus and Octavian AR denarius, ca. 42 BC

Mark Antony



Mark Antony, 34 BC AV aureus (x1.5)



Antyllus (M. Antony Jr.,)

34 BC, AV aureus reverse of specimen above



Antony's Legions

before the battle of Actium

AR denarius

Mark Antony was born about 83 BC. His father and grandfather had been prominent in Roman politics and his mother, Julia, was the sister of Julius Caesar. He fought with Caesar in Gaul. As tribune of the plebs in 49 BC he vetoed the Senate decree that would have revoked Caesar's command. He commanded Caesar's left wing at Pharsalia. In the fateful year 44, he served as Consul with Caesar. After Caesar's death, a power struggle between Antony and Octavian led to formation of the Second Triumvirate.

After Brutus and Cassius were killed at Philippi, Antony went on to his province of Asia, where he met Cleopatra at Tarsus in 42. Relations between Antony and Octavian then began to deteriorate. As part of a political reconciliation, he married Octavia, the latter's sister, in 40—but sent her back to her brother in 32 and fell completely under the sway of Cleopatra. After the inevitable clash, and fateful Battle of Actium in 31, Cleopatra and Antony retreated to Egypt.

After his father's suicide, Antyllus, (Antony's son by Fulvia) was executed in Alexandria under the order of Octavian. Antony's children by Cleopatra were raised by Octavia.



Lucius Antonius

41 BC, AR denarius

brother of Antony



Fulvia, 43 BC

AR quinarius

(x1.5)

first wife



Octavia, 39 BC

AR tetradrachm

second wife



Cleopatra, 32 BC

AR denarius Queen of Egypt

Octavian



Octavian, AR denarius ca. 32-29 BC

Gaius Octavius, the great-nephew and adopted son of Julius Caesar, was born on the 23rd of September, 63 BC. His mother was the daughter of Caesar's sister Julia. Following Caesar's assassination, he inherited three-fourths of Caesar's estate, but more importantly he inherited the supernatural aura of Caesar's psyche.

Octavian had been pursuing his studies at Apollonia when word of Caesar's death reached him. He returned immediately to Italy, where he was warmly welcomed by the troops. He was destined to clash immediately with Mark Antony, who had been a close political and military aide to his uncle. With the unlikely help of Republican forces, Octavian defeated Antony at Mutina. Antony then withdrew across the Alps and Octavian returned to Rome, his forces greatly increased, and was named Consul.

Shortly thereafter, a reconciliation with Antony led to formation of the Second Triumvirate with Lepidus. The combined forces of Octavian and Antony then moved into Greece against Brutus and Cassius. The ensuing Battle of Philippi, and the deaths of the two assassins, ended all hopes of the Republican party. Antony and Octavian shared a tenuous division of power for the next decade, but in the end Octavian became sole ruler of the entire Roman world.

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The Emperors of Rome

No introduction to ancient Roman coins could be complete without

a portrait gallery of Roman emperors. This is by no means a novel idea, and one can easily find biographical information for most of the rulers of the Roman empire. There are many hooks and electronic media sources which do this in one fashion or another. But, the purpose of this series is to bring together as much information as possible for the beginning collector who does not have a Library of references and surveys—perhaps not even a computer. Fortunately new information is revealed each year, and we have endeavored to keep the text in these following vignettes as current and accurate as possible. In order to add interest and value for the experienced numismatist, who has probably memorized the faces of most personalities seen here, we have attempted to incorporate exceptional images and useful

reference material. All of this information is available from other sources. We are certainly not generating any significant new thought on the subject, but the synthesis of information in these portraits will hopefully shorten the learning curve and make future reference easier.

The following sections follow a standard format which includes a numismatic portrait of the principal subject, accompanied by the popular name, dates of reign and denomination of the illustrated specimen. A very abbreviated historical commentary is followed by a condensed genealogy and select bibliography for each ruler. In the genealogical charts, direct relationships are indicated by solid lines, while indirect relationships (e.g. adoption or uncertain relationships) are indicated by a broken line. Within the bibliographic entries, one will inevitably find some obscure works or works in languages other than English. These are included either because they are the most important resource available or because references for a particular subject are scarce in any language. The libraries of the American Numismatic Society in New York City and the American Numismatic Association in Colorado Springs, Colorado, are probably the best resources for these references. All should be obtainable from university libraries, or some larger public libraries, through interlibrary loan programs.

Portraits of non-ruling relatives or associates which appear on the coinage of an emperor's reign are also included, but without historical commentary. These portraits are set within a box of thinner line than that used for ruling authorities. Where two portraits appear on a page together, and both are set in boxes with bold lines, both of the individuals laid claim to the rank of Augustus. In some cases, the portrait of a family member could apply to more than one principal—e.g. the coins with a portrait of Antonia, the daughter-in-law of Tiberius, were actually issued by her grandson Caligula. In these cases, the portraits are

normally appended to the issuing emperor's portrait. Those family members who eventually succeeded to the purple are not included in these subordinate vignettes, but as principals on ensuing pages. We have not included those personalities whose portraits appear only on provincial coins, since those coins will be discussed in the forthcoming Volume IV.

Our preference has been to present these portraits in the format of one emperor family per page. Whenever practical, we have done so. In some cases, this has not been possible due to the extent (or lack) of critical information—or the number of subordinate personalities. The determination of which usurpers, and there were many, should actually be accorded the title "emperor" is a bit ambiguous. We have tried to include all of those who issued (confirmably genuine) coins proclaiming imperial authority, whether or not

their actual circumstance warranted the title.

The question of when here to terminate the Roman series has been debated for centuries. In the days when historians adhered to Gibbon's "Decline and Fall" view of the empire, it was traditionally accepted that Romulus Augustus was the final Roman emperor. More recent views have tended not to focus so intently on the supposed "fall" of the Western empire. It is even felt by some that the Eastern empire, which is referred to by most numismatists and scholars as "Byzantine", was merely a continuation of that founded at Rome. Although not without merit, this argument is a bit oversimplified. The two cultures were quite different in many respects. We will get into that discussion more in Volume V of this series.

Setting aside social and geopolitical considerations, the monetary reform of Anastasius in AD 498 marks a convenient, if not entirely rational, point from which numismatists can categorize earlier coinage as Roman and later coinage as Romaion (Byzantine). As a result, Anastasius becomes the final emperor in the Roman series and the first emperor in the Romaion series. This division is the basis for the categorical numbering of David Sear's Roman Coins and Their Values and Byzantine Coins and Their Values. The bible of Roman coins, Roman Imperial Coinage (RIC) records the coinage of emperors through Leontius (AD 484-488), leaving Anastasius to the realm of Eastern successors—by whatever name they shall be called.

Augustus



Augustus, 27 BC - AD 14 AR denarius (x1.5)

By 27 BC, he had eliminated all serious contenders, and consolidated enough power to become the sole ruler of the Roman world. In January of that

year, the Roman Senate bestowed upon Octavian exceptional powers, and the

special name/title Augustus. From this date we reckon the beginning of the Roman Empire. Among other powers, he was granted the offices of Consul, Censor, Tribune and Imperator for life. As Consul he could propose any law in the Senate, as Censor he could replace any Senators who refused to vote for his proposal, as Tribune he could veto any law proposed by another, and as

Imperator he was permanently invested with a standing army. These offices were originally created to provide a system of checks and balances, but combining them all in one person resulted in a position of absolute power.

In most cases, it seems that Augustus used this power wisely. During his long and prosperous reign, he completely reorganized the government. Many public works were completed, including numerous temples, arches, roads and waterways. He also stabilized the frontiers and established a system of colonies which helped to assure their security. In distant lands, he fostered the support of conquered peoples by allowing local kings to retain their titles as Roman clients. He was surprisingly lenient with some who had supported his enemies, and allowed these kings a great deal of local authority.

Augustus had no male offspring, but his only child Julia (a daughter by his first wife, Scribonia) was married to Agrippa and produced two heirs—Caius and Lucius. Their father, the emperor's closest childhood friend, most able general and heir apparent died unexpectedly in 12 BC. Augustus had adopted the two princes as his own sons, and prepared them for the purple, but they tragically died in their teens and

Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Atius Balbus

Caius Octavius

I

1[^]

Gaius Octavius

—I—

Atia

I

Julia

(sister of Julius Caesar) 1



Agrippa, AR denarius (x1.5) son-in-law of Augustus



Julia, AR denarius (x1.5) daughter of Augustus



Caius and Lucius, Caesars

AR denarius (x1.5)

with their mother Julia

left him without a successor. When Agrippa died, Augustus forced

Tiberius and Julia to marry (11 BC). This was against both of their wills, and led to an unhappy union. Tiberius was the son of Livia, the second wife of Augustus. On the death of his grandson Caius, Augustus then reluctantly adopted his stepson (and now son-in-law) Tiberius.

The sweeping changes in government brought about by Augustus included a complete reform of the monetary system. Under the new system, the gold aureus became a regular issue rather than a special or commemorative issue and a new series of bronze coins was issued in great numbers, fostering domestic trade and commerce. Mint operations were also centralized and the currency took on a form of stability not previously seen by many Roman citizens in their lifetimes.

Augustus was a patron of the arts, and loved to collect curiosities from distant

lands. Pliny the Elder mentions his habit of giving coins from far away places to his friends as gifts. He surrounded himself with the finest sculpture and commissioned Greek artists to engrave precious gems and decorate his villas. He lived to the respectable age of 77 and, unlike most of his successors, died of natural causes.

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Tiberius



Tiberius, AD 14-37 AV aureus (x2)

Tiberius Claudius Nero was descended from the aristocratic family of the Claudii. Born in 42 BQ he came into the household of Octavian at the

age of four when his parents were compelled to divorce so that Livia could be free to marry the Future Augustus.

Tiberius was an able military leader and spent his early years serving in the army. He accompanied Augustus on the Spanish campaign and was himself successful in Armenia and Raetia. He also campaigned in Illyricum, Germany and Dalmatia (where he was acclaimed Imperator). As the young caesars Caius and Lucius matured and rose to prominence, Tiberius withdrew to the seclusion of Rhodes where he studied and avoided marital strife with

Julia, who remained in Rome. When Caius died in AD 4, Tiberius became the heir apparent and reentered public life. He was adopted by Augustus and given the name Tiberius Julius Caesar. In AD 13 he was made Proconsul, and acknowledged as the successor to Augustus. He acceded to the throne without opposition when Augustus died in AD 14. Tiberius proved to be an able administrator and the empire prospered under his helmsmanship. Initially, he ruled the empire almost exclusively from Rome, only leaving the city once in his first twelve years as emperor. In later years, the turmoil of internal conspiracies and power struggles left him disenchanted. Leaving the praetorian praefect Sejanus in charge, he retired to the island of Caprae in AD 26, where he spent the last 11 years of his life. The palace intrigues of this period make very interesting reading and, although not always reliable, Suetonius painted a remarkable picture of the Julio-Claudian age in his *Lives of the Caesars*.

Tiberius was married initially to Vipsania Agrippina and had a son named Nero Claudius Drusus Julius Caesar. Drusus was born about 14 BC, and after the death of his uncle (Germanicus) became the heir to the throne. However, according to the ancient historians, he was poisoned in AD 23 by his wife Livilla in conspiracy with Sejanus.



Drusus, died AD 23 AE as, son of Tiberius



Livia (or Livilla?) AE dupondius



Ti. Gemellus & Germanicus

AD 22-23, AE sestertius

grandchildren of Tiberius

One of the family coins issued under the authority of Tiberius was the dupondius with a veiled female head

in the guise of Pietas. This same series also includes similar portrait dupondii with personifications of Salus

and Justitia. These coins have traditionally been attributed as bearing a portrait of Livia, the mother of Tiberius and second wife of Augustus.

However, an intriguing hypothesis by Matthew Kreuzer ("Livilla's portrait on Roman coinage", *The Celator*, February, 1995) suggests another possibility. Although arguable, Kreuzer's conclusion that the portrait is actually that of Livilla, the wife of Drusus, seems plausible.

The young twins Tiberius Gemellus and Germanicus, grandsons of Tiberius, were also honored on an attractive sestertius issued during his reign. Germanicus died in 23 and Gemellus died early in the reign of Caligula.

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Gaius (Caligula)



Caligula, AD 37-41 AE as



Germanicus AE as, died AD 19 father of Caligula



(Caligula, the son of Germanicus and

Agrippina was born in AD 12 at Antium (a town of Latium near the

Tuscan Sea). His grandparents included the daughter of Mark Antony, the daughter of Augustus, his maternal grandparents]

Agrippina and the brother of Caligula. By any standards, Caligula wore the badge of nobility. Still, there were a considerable number of family members who would have taken precedence over him were it not for the unnatural habit of dying unexpectedly.

Most of his childhood was spent on the Rhine, where his father was campaigning with the Roman army. There, he was given the nickname "Caligula", which means little boot, because he would wear the miniature dress of a private soldier with its characteristic half-boot. In spite of the fact that all official records refer to him by his formal name, the nickname has survived nearly two thousand years!

Caligula enjoyed the support of Tiberius, who had no surviving heirs, and came to power also with the support of the military. Early in his reign he showed signs of being a capable ruler, and did much to restore the memory of his family which suffered under Tiberius and Sejanus (Tiberius had banished Caligula's mother to Pandataria, where she starved to death in AD 33). Some of this restored familial honor was probably intended to bolster his own credibility since he lacked any major accomplishments of his own and had to rely on old family loyalties. Before long, he seems to have become obsessed

with power (some would say insane) and ruled with an unbearable ruthlessness and capaciousness. He is remembered by historians mostly for his depravity and

Agrippina Sr., died AD 33

AE sestertius,

mother of Caligula



Agrippa

AE as, died U BC

father of Agrippina Sr.

grandfather of Caligula



Nero and Drusus, Caesars

AE dupondius

brothers of Caligula

excess. He had himself declared a living god and set up a special temple in his own honor. There seems to have been no limit to his megalomania.

Under Caligula's reign, virtually no one was safe, and a good many of Rome's most talented leaders met their demise. He once suggested that his favorite horse should be elected Consul for the year. In addition to ridiculing the Senate on every possible occasion, he also did so with the Praetorian Guard. This indiscretion proved to be his undoing, as he was eventually

murdered along with his wife and child by a tribune at the Palatine games.

The coinage of Caligula is not particularly rare, but his notoriety, even today, places the surviving specimens in high demand. It has been suggested that after his death there was a purposeful destruction of coin types bearing his image, but this is conjectural. For whatever reason, it is difficult to find specimens in the highest grades.

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Condensed Genealogy

Nero Claudius Drusus

Antonia

I

Germanicus

Agrippa

I

Julia

Agrippina Sr.

Gaius Caesar (Caligula)

1

Claudius



Claudius, AD 41-54 AE as

Claudius, the uncle of Caligula, was the son of Nero Claudius Drusus and Antonia. He was born August 1, 10 BC and was sickly as a child afflicted with a speech impediment (probably Tourette syndrome).

(bibliography), he tended to stay clear of public life. He was an ardent student of history and had resigned himself to the life of a scholar. When Caligula was murdered in 41, the praetorians proclaimed Claudius emperor (to his surprise) and he was soon thereafter acknowledged by the Senate. Like Caligula, he honored the memory of his family, but there the similarities ended. Unlike Caligula, he was sensitive to the position of the Senate as well as the Praetorian Guard. His first coins paid due respect to both of those institutions. Claudius restored the policies of Augustus and initiated a new round of public works, including the famous port of Ostia which was not completed until the reign of Nero. He also reformed the courts and restored justice to the empire. His armies were successful in Germany and began the invasion of Britain. Claudius was popular with the people of Rome and restored many of the festivals and public entertainments of earlier days.

In 39 he married Messalina, and a son Britannicus was born two years later. They also had two daughters, Octavia and Antonia. Messalina's infidelities and gross indiscretions led eventually to her execution.



Nero Claudius Drusus

AE sestertius

father of Claudius



Antonia, AR denarius Mother of Claudius



Agrippina Junior AR denarius

4th wife of Claudius.



ocution in 48. Claudius then married Agrippina Jr. who had been exiled by

Caligula in 39, and adopted her son. It proved to be a monumental mistake as in 54, to assure the succession of her son, Agrippina poisoned Claudius with a dish of mushrooms. Britannicus was also poisoned, by Nero, soon after the latter's accession. As a child, Britannicus was a close friend of Titus, the son of Vespasian. A sesterce which has formerly been attributed to the later years of the reign of Claudius is now thought to be an issue by Titus. It was presumably struck in memory of

his close friend, and also as a reminder of his ties to the Julio-Claudians—who were, even after their demise, still revered by many Romans. Although the coinage of Claudius is quite conservative in comparison to that of Nero, the introduction of allegorical figures (Spes, Libertas and Constantia) paved the way for important changes in the nature of numismatic narrative. Constantia, the personification of steadfastness and perseverance, was an especially fitting propaganda in light of the turmoil caused by Caligula. The use of symbolic figures rapidly became a standard part of the iconography of later rulers' issues.

Britannicus, AE sesterce

Son of Claudius

(probably struck in his

memory by Titus)

Select Bibliography

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Nero, AD 54-68 AE sesterce

Like Caligula, Nero was born at Antium (must have been bad water!). He was seemingly afflicted with the same madness that plagued his uncle, as in 59 he had his own mother executed. Nero married Octavia in 53, a year before his mother murdered Claudius, and eventually murdered her as well. He then married Poppaea Sabina in 62. He is usually credited with starting the infamous fire of 64 which destroyed most of Rome.

In spite of the excesses of his administration, much good was also accomplished. Massive building projects were undertaken and many of them are portrayed on Nero's coinage. Nero was a great patron of the arts and under his reign we see a flourishing of architecture, literature and music. Finally, the military success of his generals led to the closing of the doors to the temple of Janus—only allowed in times of world peace. Nero's power was eventually broken by a revolt of the army in Gaul. He committed suicide, ending the Julio-Claudian dynasty.



Poppaea Sabina

AE dupondius, ca. 228 BC

second wife of Nero

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

L. Domitius Ahenobarbus

Antonia Major

I

Germanicus

I

Cnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus

TT

Agrippina Sr.

I

I

Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus Nero

Agrippina Jr.

1 Claudius

(lodius Macer



Clodius Macer, AD 68 AR denarius (x1.5)

Little is recorded in the histories, and none of the older dictionaries of classical biography do not even list Lucius Clodius Macer. He was not included by Suetonius as one of the first twelve Caesars. Macer was appointed by Nero to the position of legatus Augusti propraetore Africae. He rose in rebellion against Nero in the spring of AD 68 and employed the Numidian based legion (Legio III) and a newly formed legion (Legio I) to control the city of Carthage and its important naval resources. From this power base he pirated the entire north African coast, with the intention of disrupting the flow of grain to Rome and increasing his leverage. At the same time, in Spain, Galba had declared himself the representative of the Roman Senate and people. After consolidating his position, and obtaining recognition in Rome, Galba ordered the execution of Macer.

The coinage of Clodius Macer, which consists only of silver denarii, is quite rare—even though, according to RIC, there are at least 34 obverse and 41 reverse dies known. A recent census recorded 85 coins of all types, and only 20 known portrait coins.

Select Bibliography

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Chronicle, 1983, pp. 64-80.

Condensed Genealogy

Lucius Clodius Macer

Galba



Galba, AD 68-69 AE sestertius

Servius Sulpicius Galba was born in 3 BC, descended from a prestigious Republican family. He was a distinguished Senator, and served as governor of Germany and Atrua, under

Caligula and Claudius, before being appointed governor of Spain by Nero.

With Clodius Macer rebelling in Africa, and Vindex in Gaul, the empire was in need of a leader to rescue it from

the chaos left in the wake of the later Julio-Claudians. At the request of Vindex, Galba assumed leadership of the revolt and following Nero's suicide assumed the title Augustus. This was almost immediately confirmed by the Senate. Galba was well liked by many influential Romans and was a favorite of Livia, who did much to encourage his career. He adopted as his heir an equally influential noble, L. Calpurnius Piso.

Ironically, following years of instability and uncertainty under Nero, the Roman people were not ready for the austerity and strict controls of Galba. He was especially unpopular with the army, which was accustomed to governmental bribes and the acquiescence of weak rulers. The army of Lower Germany rebelled and proclaimed their own commander, Vitellius, emperor in January, AD 69. In Rome, a conspiracy led by Otho murdered Galba in the Forum some two weeks later.

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Condensed Genealogy

Sulpicius Galba

I Caius Sulpicius Galba

Descendant of Quintus Catullus Capitolinus

Mummia Achaica

I

1

Servius Sulpicius Galba



Otho, AD 69 AR denarius (x1.5)

Otho was born to a distinguished Etruscan family in AD 32 . He was an ambitious social climber and managed to become a close friend of Nero. Otho was married to Poppaea Sabina, who used her husband to gain access to the court. She then won the heart of the emperor, who cleared the way to marry her by appointing her husband governor of Lusitania (Portugal) in 59. He seems to have served effectively in this position for ten years.

At first Otho supported Vindex and Galba in the revolt against Nero, hoping that he would be adopted as Galba's heir. He cultivated a base of support among the Praetorians and the civil staff of the court. Galba, however, chose a successor based on merit. Frustrated in this effort, Otho formed a conspiracy against his former ally and proclaimed himself emperor with the support of the praetorians. Five days after Piso was named successor to Galba, Otho engineered a cavalry attack against them in the forum and murdered both. Meanwhile, Vitellius advanced against Rome and Otho reluctantly met him in

northern Italy. Following an initial setback, in which his column was ambushed, a demoralized Otho determined to end the killing of Romans by Romans and committed suicide.

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(Otho, pp. 225-229). Metcalf, William E. "The coinage of Otho and early imperial mint

organisation", Essays in Honour of Robert Carson and Kenneth

Jenkins, London, 1993, pp. 155-160.

Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Salvius Otho

Titia

_1

I

Lucius Salvius Otho

I

Albia Terentia

I

Marcus Salvius Otho

57

Vitellius

Vitellius is only remembered in history because he may be reckoned as one of the first twelve Caesars. Aside from this happenstance; his reign

seems to have been unremarkable. He was a close friend of several earlier emperors, but was characterized by ancient historians as a voracious glutton and hedonist as well as being totally ineffectual in his administration of government affairs. His troops were overrun by the army of Vespasian, and Vitellius was murdered. By some accounts, his body was dragged through the

streets of Rome and thrown into the Tiber.



Vitellius, AD 69 AR denarius (x1.5)



Lucius Vitellius, AR denarius (x1.5) father of Vitellius



Vitellius Gertnanicus & Vitellia II AR denarius (x1.5) Vitellius'children

Select Bibliography

Bastien, Pierre. "Vitellius et le temple de Jupiter Capitolin: un as inedit" *Quaderni ticinesi Numismatica*...., 7,1978, pp. 181-202.

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Condensed Genealogy

Publius Vitellius

Lucius Vitellius

Marcus Sextilius

I

Fabia

1

Sextilia

1

Aulus Vitellius

Vespasian



Vespasian, AD 69-79 AVaureus (x1.5)

Vespasian came to power in the midst of civil unrest and factional strife—
rising through support of the

eastern legions and the governors of Syria and Egypt. He was born into a humble family and knew adversity well. His father was a tax collector and Vespasian climbed the ladder of success slowly. He gained Senatorial rank, and command of a legion, through the help of well placed friends. In one twelve-year span he went from Consul to mule-dealer back to Proconsul of Africa. Such were the fortunes of politics during the reign of Nero. Vespasian and Titus were commissioned by Nero to suppress the revolt in Judaea and during their prosecution of the war they learned of the revolt against him. Vespasian supported Galba and then Otho, but refused to support Vitellius. He obtained the acclamation of his legions on July 1, 69 and his forces quickly prevailed over Vitellius. He remained in Alexandria until 70, then left Titus in charge of the war effort and returned to Rome to take up administration of the empire. During his reign a number of building projects were undertaken and the frontiers were cleared of rebellion. One of the important policies of his administration was the settling of Civil War veterans on the frontiers. This helped to increase security for these regions and gain the respect of the military.

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Vespasian: classification and

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H. "The mints of Vespasian", Num. Chron., 1921, pp. 187 ff.

Condensed Genealogy

Titus Flavius Petro I

Tertulla Sabina

I Titus Flavius Sabinus

I

Vespasius Pollio

I

Vespasia Polla

I

1

Titus Flavius Vespasianus (Vespasian)

Titus

When his father came to power in AD 69, Titus was left in the East to deal
with

the Jewish revolt — which he finally

brought to a conclusion five years later. One of the notorious acts of that war
was the destruction and sacking of the Temple of Jerusalem. In 70 AD, Titus
ascended the throne and is generally regarded by historians as a benevolent
ruler. During his two-year reign the famous Colosseum, started by his father,
was completed. The destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum, a major fire in
the city of Rome and a devastating plague also occurred. Nevertheless, he
seems to have dealt with these calamities in a way that maintained his
popularity.



Titus, AD 79-81 AE dupondius



Julia Jiti, AE dupondius daughter of Titus

r*x



Domitilla, AR denarius (xl.25)

wife of Vespasian mother of Titus & Domitian

Select Bibliography

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Wend, David E. "Titus: darling of the human race?", The Celator, three parts, Oct. / Nov. / Dec. 1996.

Condensed Genealogy

Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasia Polla

I I

Vespasian

I

Flavius Liberalis

I Flavia Domitilla

I

Titus Flavius Vespasianus (Titus)

Domitian



Domitian, AD 81-96 AE as (x1.25)

Titus Flavius Domitianus was the younger son of Vespasian and Domitilla. During the time between the overthrow of Vitellius and

Vespasian's return to Rome from the East, Domitian administered affairs in the city for his father. He was a bit too aggressive in decision making during this period, and subsequently was bestowed with many honors, but was also relieved of many responsibilities. Domitian succeeded his elder brother, Titus, in 81 and seems to have been an able and effective administrator. History has been unkind to him, perhaps deservedly—but more likely because of biased accounts. He did little to win the favor of the aristocrats, the class from which came the chroniclers. At first, he was very popular with the army, but his autocratic style of leadership and total lack of social graces did not endear him to the Senate. In the end, succumbing to suspicion and panic, he terrorized that body and the leadership of the army. As he had feared, a conspiracy cut his life short—stabbed in his bath by a freedman.



Domitia, AV aureus wife of Domitian

Select Bibliography

Carradice, I. Coinage and Finances in the Reign of Domitian, A.D.

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Condensed Genealogy

Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasia Polla

Vespasian I

Flavius Liberalis

I Flavia Domitilla

I

Titus Flavius Domitianus

Nerva



Nerva, AD 96-98 AE dupondius (x1.25)

Nerva was a distinguished Senator, serving as Consul once under Vespasian and again under Domitian. He was in his sixties at the time of Domitian's assassination, and was not seen as a threat to either the Senate or the military. Although he had no military accomplishments, he understood the need for popularity among the troops and adopted Marcus Ulpius Trajanus as his successor. This precedent of adoption based on merit and the needs of the empire was emulated by his successors and led to a golden era often referred to as the period of the "Adoptive Emperors". Nerva recalled the victims of Domitian who had survived in exile, and condemned the memory of his name, but was forced to give up to the Praetorians the murderers of his predecessor.

Nerva's policies were generous, and he did much to improve the lot of the

common man. He repealed oppressive taxes and endowed orphanages in addition to providing free food distributions. It is generally reported that Nerva was an elderly statesman, but he was still in his sixties (his date of birth is variously reported as AD 30, 32 and 35) when he died of natural causes. Even for the time, this was not what one would call a very advanced age. Augustus was 77 when he died.

Select Bibliography

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Trajan, A.D. 69-117, Cambridge, 1927. Syme, R. "The Imperial Finances under Domitian, Nerva and Trajan",

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Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Cocceius Nerva I Marcus Cocceius Nerva II

I

Marcus Cocceius Nerva (III)

Caius Octavius Laenas II

i

Sergia Plautilla

I

Trajan



Marcus Ulpius Trajanus was born in Spain and became the first Roman

emperor from outside of Italy. 1 lis lather had been a lieutenant under Vespasian and was made a patrician by him. Following a distinguished military career, Trajan was adopted by Nerva and named Caesar. When Nerva died, the succession was uneventful.

Trajan was well liked by the Senate, which he respected; by the military, which he led and by the people for whom he cared. He was amiable and possessed a simplicity of manners. He introduced the secret ballot to the Senate, protecting individuals from the retribution of a displeased ruler.

His reign was highlighted by an ambitious building program which was financed to a great extent by his expansionist wars on the fringe of the empire—especially in Dacia and the East (Arabia). One of the famous monuments, Trajan's Column, which depicts the events of his war in Dacia, was commemorated on several coin types and still stands to-

Trajan, AD 98-117 AE sestertius



Plotina, AV aureus (x1.5) wife of Trajan



Nerva and Trajan Pater AV aureus (x1.5)



Marciana

AR denarius (x1.5)

sister of Trajan

Matidia

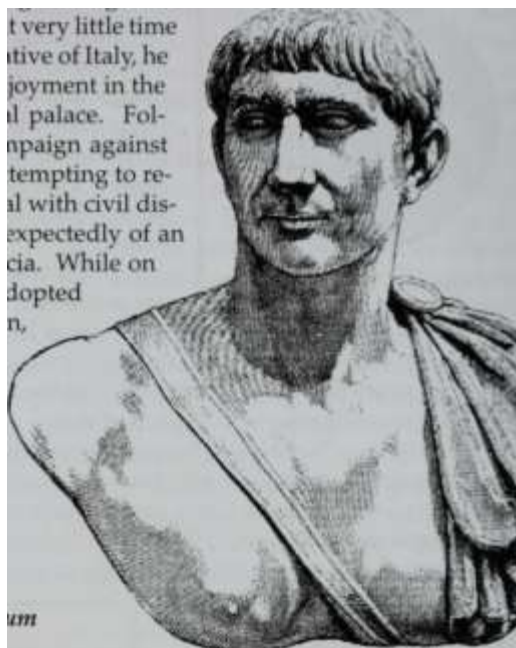
AR denarius (x1.5)

daughter of Marciana

day. Another monumental achievement portrayed on his coins was the famous bridge built to cross the Danube. These conquests, and the monuments and public works initiated by him, figure prominently on many of the coins issued during his reign.

Trajan actually spent very little time in Rome. Not being a native of Italy, he probably found little enjoyment in the life-style of the imperial palace. Following a successful campaign against the Parthians, he was attempting to return to the capital to deal with civil disorder when he died unexpectedly of an illness at Selinus in Cilicia. While on his death bed, Trajan adopted his chief of staff, Hadrian, who was immediately acclaimed emperor by the army.

Bust of Trajan in the Vatican Museum



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Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Ulpius Trajanus

I

Nerva

i i i

1

Marcus Ulpius Trajanus

Marcia

—|

Hadrian

I [adrian is one of the most commented on rulers of ancient Rome. 1 lis accomplishments and extensive travels are a biographer's dream. From the age of ten he was a ward of his cousin Trajan, who treated him as a son. He married Trajan's great-niece Sabina, the daughter of Matidia. Hadrian was a practical ruler, with a flair for the dramatic. In one proclamation, he remitted an enormous debt of back taxes and publicly burned the records. He was a great patron of sports and of the arts. A distinctive style of the period is today referred to as the "Hadrianic School". Hadrian died at Baiae, near Naples, of a lingering illness in July, 138.



Hadrian, AD 117-138 AR denarius (x 2)



Aelius, Caesar AR denarius



Sabina, AV aureus wife of Hadrian

Select Bibliography

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Toynbee, Jocelyn M. *The Hadrianic School: A chapter in the history of Greek art*, Cambridge, 1934.

Condensed Genealogy

Aelius Hadrianus

Marinellus I

Ulpia

I

I Publius Aelius Hadrianus Afer

Trajan

Domitia Paulina I

1

Publius Aelius Hadrianus

Antoninus Pius



Faustina Senior

AV aureus (xl.5)

wife of Antoninus Pius

Amongst the most brilliant decisions of Hadrian's career, was his adoption of Antoninus (following the death of his less commendable choice, Aelius). Although born in Italy, Antoninus was the descendent of a prestigious family from Nemausus in Gaul. He, his father and both of his grandfathers had served as Consul. At the time of his adoption, Hadrian also arranged for Antoninus to adopt Marcus Aurelius (a nephew of Faustina) and Lucius Verus (son of the deceased Caesar, Aelius). Thus, the succession was assured.

During the reign of Antoninus a major uprising took place in Britain and a new wall was constructed north of Hadrian's famous wall. This, as well as other lesser rebellions, was handled by subordinates, as the emperor never left Rome during his reign. Antoninus celebrated the 900th anniversary of Rome's founding with great festivity and a special issue of coinage. His death and the accession of his successors came as peacefully as did most of his reign of 23 years.

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Numismatic Chronicle, ser. 7, vol. 6, 1966, pp. 147-153.

Condensed Genealogy

Titus Aurelius Fulvus I Arrius Antoninus Boionia Procilla

'i, 1

Titus Aurelius Fulvus II

Arria Fadilla Hadrian

J

Titus Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus Pius

Marcus Aurelius



Marcus Aunlius, AD 161-180 i4£ sestertertius



Faustina Jr., AV aureus (x1.5) wife of Marcus Aurelius

Notwithstanding tlu> reputation of

Julian II, Marcus Aurolius is probably the only Roman emperor as famous for his philosophy as he was for his reign. That may be considered a reflection of his greatness with a pen, or conversely his lack of greatness with a sword. Although he spent much of his reign on the frontier, battling foreign incursions and justifiably earning the title Im-perator, his writings during this

time produced greater and more lasting effect than his armies.

Aurelius married Annia Galeria Faustina, the daughter of Antoninus and Faustina I, while still Caesar. He was raised to the throne alone, but immediately elevated Lucius Verus as co-emperor according to Hadrian's plan. After the death of Verus, Aurelius raised his own son Commodus to the throne as co-emperor. This proved to be the undoing of the Antonines and a harbinger of Rome's decline.

Select Bibliography

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Dodd, C.H. "Chronology of the Danubian Wars of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius", *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1913, pp. 162 ff.

Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Annius Rupilia Publius Calvisius

Verus I Faustina Tullus Ruso Domitia Lucilla

I

Marcus Annius Verus II

I

1

Domitia Calvilla Lucilla I Antoninus Pius

Aelius Annius Verus Marcus Aurelius

Lucius Verus



Lucius Verus, AD 161-169 AV aureus (xl.5)



Lucilla, AV aureus (xl.5) wife of Lucius Verus

L. Ceionius Commodus, the son of

Aelius, was adopted by Antoninus Pius and renamed Lucius Aelius An relius Commodus. When he was named co-emperor by Marcus Aurelius

he changed his name once more to Lucius Aurelius Verus. Verus married Lucilla, the daughter of Aurelius and

Faustina II, at Ephesus in 164. They had three children, but no record exists of their fate.

Verus conducted a very successful campaign against the Parthians, taking the capital at Ctesiphon and clearing Armenia, Mesopotamia and Media. For this he was granted the titles "Armeniacus", "Parthicus", and "Medicus".

Following a Triumphal celebration in Rome, he and Aurelius campaigned together in the north. On the return from one of these wars, Verus suffered a mortal stroke and died in northern Italy.

Select Bibliography

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Szaivert, W. *Die Miinprägung der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus und Commodus*, Vienna, 1986.

Condensed Genealogy

L. Ceionius Commodus Caius Avidius Nigrinus Fabia

(L. Aelius Verus Caesar) . ,

I Antoninus Pius

Avidia

Aelius A. Ceionius Commodus (Lucius Verus)

Commodus



Commodus, AD 177-192 AV aureus (xl.5)

Marcus Auiulius and Faustina Jr. had nine children, but only one male survived to adulthood. Lucius Aurelius Commodus lacked all of the fine traits of his adoptive ancestors and the failure of his father to choose a successor on merit, rather than heredity, was a crucial mistake. Both his wife Crispina, and his sister Lucilla, were involved in plots against him. They suffered similar fates—banishment to Caprae and eventual execution. From that point things got progressively worse. Rome was racked by famine, plague and fire. Imperial projects led to folly and ridicule. His corruption and abuse of power was exacerbated by increasing megalomania. Commodus saw himself as immortal, even as Hercules. He fought wild beasts in the Arena and considered himself a gladiator. On the last day of 192, as he was preparing to assume the consulship the

next day in the demeaning dress of a gladiator, he was assassinated by incredulous members of his own court.



Crispina, AV aureus (xl.5) wife of Commodus

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Annius Verus

l Marcus Aurelius

I

Antoninus Pius

I

Annia Galeria Faustina Sr.

Annia Galeria Faustina Jr.

I

Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus

Pertinax

tasn



Pertinax, AD 193 AR denarius (xl.5)

Publius Helvius Pertinax came to power through a career in die military;

He was the son of a freedman of tin-Equestrian order and was promoted to legionary command because of his

leadership ability. He served as governor of several provinces, and became

a Senator under Marcus Aurelius. He served twice as Consul before his accession. Pertinax became a powerful political figure and was serving as Consul and City Praefect when chosen to succeed Commodus.

He immediately put into place reforms and controls to restore order in the chaos left by his predecessor. This included increasing the discipline of the praetorians, which led to their rebellion and his murder after only 87 days in office.

Had he lived, and secured the support of the military, Pertinax may well have salvaged the decaying empire. He was a man of strong will and broad experience, with a deep sense of civic responsibility—a striking contrast to the insanity that preceded his elevation. As fate would have it, his death cast the Roman world into a state of civil war that drained both its resources and its spirit. Although stability would return under the dynasty of the Severans, the old nobility of Rome had lost their grasp on the empire and its course was destined to change.

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Condensed Genealogy

Lucius Hedius Rufus Lollianus Avitus

Helvius Successus

Publius Helvius Pertinax

Didius Julianus

Wealth and a connection to the Antonines commended Didius Julianus to the people of Rome, but only wealth was necessary. Following the murder of Pertinax the praetorians wielded absolute power. They auctioned off the throne to the highest bidder, and Julianus won—or lost as the case may be. He failed to gain the critical support of legions in the field (even though he had promised them an amnesty). When the forces of Septimius Severus approached the city, he was murdered in his palace—after a reign of only 66

days. The coins of Julianus and his family are quite scarce, in spite of the wealth that he must have converted for payment to the praetorians.



Didius Julianus, AD 193 AV aureus (x1.5)



Manlia Scantilla

AR denarius (x1.5)

wife of Didius Julianus



Didia Clara

AR denarius (x 15\ daughter

of Didius Julianus

Select Bibliography

Woodward, A.M. "The coinage of Didius Julianus and his family", *The Numismatic Chronicle*, series 7, vol. 1, pp. 71-90, London, 1961.

Condensed Genealogy

Quintus Petronius Severus

I

Petronius Didius Severus

Aemilia Clara

1^

Marcus Severus Didius Julianus

Pescennius Niger



Pescennius Niger, AD 193-194 AR denarius (x1.5)

Cains Pescennius Niger was the governor of Syria when civil war broke

out on the death of IVrtinav I le was born in Italy, and had risen to a position of prominence through military service. Niger had served as Consul under Commodus in 190. When the news arrived, he was proclaimed emperor by his troops and took the surname Justus. He planned to march im Rome until he heard of the approach of the northern legions under Severus. Instead, he prepared for the inevitable war by lining up allies and forces in Asia Minor.

Aemilianus, governor of the province of Asia, made an attempt to stop the crossing of Severus at the Bosphorus, but was defeated and slain. Xiger met the Severan forces at Nicaea, but was pushed back and fell in retreat to Syria. He met Severus in a major battle at the plains of Issus, where Alexander had defeated Darius. The loss there pushed him back to Antioch where he planned a final defense. When the city fell, he fled East to the Euphrates, where he was finally captured and beheaded.

Select Bibliography

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Clodius Albinus



Clodius Albinus

AD 195-197

AR denarius (x1.5)

Clodius Albinus was born at Hadrumetum in Africa, and like Niger had risen through the military to a governorship. Serving in Britain when Commodus was murdered, he supported the accession of Pertinax. When Didius Julianus came to the throne, Albinus refused his support and joined the rebellion of Septimius Severus. He was made Caesar on the accession of Severus, but remained in Britain as Severus prosecuted the war against Niger in the East. Relations with Albinus were strained by the obvious intention of Severus to elevate his sons to co-emperorship. In 195, while Severus was still on the Parthian campaign, Albinus took matters into his own hands. He took three legions from Britain to Lugdunum, in Gaul, where he had himself proclaimed emperor. Coinage was struck in the name of Albinus both as Caesar and as Augustus. Unfortunately, his planned march on Rome was delayed by the onset of winter. This played right into the hands of Severus. Withdrawing part of his forces from the East, he responded by marching into Gaul at the break of Spring and defeating Albinus in battle. Thoroughly crushed, and trapped in a house beside the Rhone, Albinus committed suicide. Severus sent his head to Rome.

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Ceionius Postumus

I

Aurelia Messalina

I

Decius Septimius Clodius Albinus

Septimius Severus



Septimius Severus AD 193-211, AE sestertertius



Julia Domna

AR denarius (x1.5)

wife of Septimius Severus

Severus was born at Leptis Magna,

North Africa, in 145. He obtained Senatorial rank, and commanded a legion under Marcus Aurelius. His first wife died about 187, and Severus married Julia Domna. This daughter of Bassianus, the high-priest of Emesa, proved to be extremely influential in the affairs of state through the reigns of her husband and son Caracalla.

On the death of Pertinax, Severus was acclaimed emperor by his troops and ended a bitter civil war by eliminating Niger and Albinus. In a brilliant stroke of propaganda, he established himself and his sons as "adopted descendants" of Marcus Aurelius. This homage, with newly adopted names, is evident in a tremendously large issue of coinage.

Severus spent much of his reign on military campaigns and died at York of natural causes in 211.

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Lucius Septimius Severus

I Publius Septimius Geta

I

Fulvius Pius

Fulvia Pia

I

Lucius Septimius Severus

Caracalla



Caracalla, AD 198-217

A\ aureus (x1.5)

Caracalla was born Septimius Bassianus at Lugdunum in L88. As part

of his father's reverse-adoption of Au-

relius as a parent in 1%, Caracalla was made Caesar and his official name was changed to Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. Caracalla was a later nickname derived from the hooded German cloak (caracallus) which, as emperor, he wore and made fashionable.

In 202, he married the Praetorian Praefect's daughter Plautilla and the event was commemorated on coins which show the couple clasping hands and exchanging vows. It was an unhappy marriage and Plautilla was sent into exile in 205 and later executed.

When his father died in 211, Caracalla and his brother Geta were acknowledged as co-emperors. This was unacceptable to the jealous and power hungry Caracalla. He had Geta murdered in their mother's quarters, literally in her arms. He ruled with cruelty, and while travelling near Edessa was assassinated by order of the Praetorian Praefect Macrinus.



Plautilla, AR denarius (x1.5) wife of Caracalla

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Publius Septimius Geta

i

Septimius Severus

Julius Bassianus

Julia Domna

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Septimius Bassianus (Caracalla)

Geta was born May 27, 186 in Italy and was made Caesar at the time his brother Caracalla was elevated as co-emperor with their father. In 209, he too was raised to the rank of Augustus. This clearly signified the intention of Severus to have his sons rule jointly after his death. Even before their accession, the two had fought constantly, developing a mutual hatred. Cooperation seems to have been impossible. A plan was devised to split the empire between them, but before it could be set in place, Caracalla had his 22-year-old brother murdered. Geta died three days short of the first anniversary of their joint reign.

Caracalla then had his brother's name erased from memory (*damnatio memoriae*) and proscribed a huge number of Geta's supporters—20,000 by some undoubtedly exaggerated ancient accounts. The coinage of Geta is not nearly as common as that of his brother, but neither is it rare enough to suggest that there was a massive withdrawal from circulation after his death. The *damnatio memoriae* seems to have been more of a political face-saving than an vengeful obsession.

Geta first appears on coins as a very young child, and over the years a gradual maturing may be seen. The aging of this prince, and others, as seen through numismatic portraits is a topical area of interest to collectors.

Select Bibliography

Mastino, A. *Le titolature di Caracalla e Geta*, Bologna, 1981.

Condensed Genealogy

Publius Septimius Geta

Septimius Severus

Julius Bassianus

I

Julia Domna

I

Publius Lucius Septimius Geta

Macrinus / Diadumenian



Macrinus, AD 217-218 AE sesterce

Among the great military Leaders emerging from North Africa during this period (Laetus, Albinus, Severus

and others) Macrinus also rose to power through the army. He went to Rome as a young officer and gained a position in the Severan imperial household, rising eventually to Praetorian Praefect under Caracalla.

While on the Eastern campaign of 217, Caracalla was apparently informed of a prophecy that Macrinus would become emperor. The fear of Caracalla's ruthless jealousy and suspicion led Macrinus to order his assassination in a sort of pre-emptive strike. Macrinus was then acclaimed emperor by the accompanying legions and his nine year old son Diadumenian was given the rank of Caesar.

Although he began making improvements in government, a reduction in military pay and the agitation of Julia Domna's sister Maesa led to mutiny in Syria which toppled Macrinus. Diadumenian was elevated to Augustus in the last days of their reign and is rarely indicated as such on coins. Macrinus apparently never visited Rome as emperor.



Diadumenian, AD 218 AR denarius (x1.5)

Select Bibliography

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Numismatische Zeitschrift, 93, Vienna, 1979, pp. 21-40. Meyer, James. "Focus on Macrinus", Roman Coins and Culture, 3/1, ' 1987, pp. 4-24.

Condensed Genealogy

Haius Diadumenianus

I

Marcus Opellius Macrinus

I

Nonia Celsa

Marcus Opellius Antoninus Diadumenianus

Elagabalus



Elagabalus, AD 218-222 AV aureus (x1.5)

Born Varius Avitus at Emrsd in 204, this grandson of the Severan matlian h Julia Maesa came to power through her

brokering of the mutiny against Macri-nus. Upon being proclaimed emperor, he took the name Marcus Aurelius Antoninus in typical Severan fashion. I he name Elagabalus (or Heliogabalus) refers to the Eastern sun-god, and the cult which the maternal side of the Sever-ans so heavily favored. His father, a high-priest of this Eastern cult, died before Elagabalus was made emperor. A meteorite, known as the "Stone of Emesa" was worshipped by this cult, and appears on several Roman coins of the period" (see p. 178).

As a second cousin to Caracalla, Elagabalus seemed to be the logical choice

for an attempted restoration of the Severan dynasty. The short reign of this cruel religious fanatic witnessed four marriages. The first, to Julia Cornelia Paula, would have inspired hope of a successor. She was the daughter of the Praetorian Praefect Julius Paulus. This hope was dashed when they were divorced the following year. Elagabalus then married a Vestal Virgin by the name of Aquilia Severa. This shocked Roman society and was justified by a claim that the union would produce "divine" children. They also were divorced within a year. His third wife, Annia Faustina (a maternal granddaughter of Marcus Aurelius), enjoyed even less time in the imperial palace. Finally, Elagabalus returned to his second wife, Aquilia Severa.

Recognizing that this grandson was not destined to restore the Severan dream, Julia Maesa conspired to have him (and her own daughter,



Julia Maesa, AE sestertertius

sister of Julia Domna

grandmother of Elagabalus

and Severus Alexander



Julia Soaemias, AE sestertertius

daughter of Julia Maesa

mother of Elagabalus

Soaemias) murdered by the Praetorian Guard. She had already arranged the succession in having her other grandson, Severus Alexander, named Caesar.

An extensive series of coinage was issued during the relatively brief

reign of this emperor. In addition to honoring his grandmother (Maesa) and mother (Julia Soaemias). he also struck coins honoring each of his three wives and his cousin Severus Alexander (as Caesar).

The Titles on some coins of Elagabalus are virtually identical to those used by Caracalla. Reverse types and dated honors distinguish the two, but sometimes the portrait alone is the only distinction. Discriminating between the two, especially with the younger portraits of Caracalla and those on Eastern or Provincial issues, can be difficult to the unpracticed

eye.

Julia Paula

AR deytarius

1st wife of Elagabalus

<\$fi*^



Aquilia Severa

AR denarius

2nd and 4th wife

of Elagabalus



Annia Faustina

AR denarius

3rd wife of

Elagabalus

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Caius Julius Avitus Alexianus Julia Maesa

1, '

Sexrus Varius Marcellus Julia Soaemias Bassiana

I, I

I Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Varius Avitus (Elagabalus)

Severus Alexander



Severus Alexander, AD 222-235 AR denarius (x1.5)

The assassination of his cousin Elagabalus led to Alexander's elevation to the throne in 218. This was primarily achieved through the conspiracy of his mother, and grandmother (Julia Maesa). He was born Caius Julius Bassianus Alexianus and, like Elagabalus, was a hereditary priest of Baal. Alexander was not the religious fanatic that his cousin was, and actually behaved like a virtuous Roman. He was welcomed as Augustus by the army and the people of Rome. He ruled wisely, with the help of his strict and ambitious mother—who was the real power behind the throne. He married Sallustia Barbia Orbienna about 219, but she clashed with her mother-in-law and was banished to Africa. After several years of peace, he was forced to take the field against invaders. While on campaign, he and his mother were killed at Mainz, in Germany, by a group of mutinous Pannonian troops.



Julia Mamaea, AR denarius (x1.5) mother of Severus Alexander



Orbiana, AR denarius (x1.5) wife of Severus Alexander

Select Bibliography

Hopkins, R.V.N. The Life of Alexander Severus, Cambridge, 1907.

Condensed Genealogy

Caius Julius Avitus Alexianus Julia Maesa

'-r- -J

Gessius Marcianus

I

Julia Avita Mamaea

Marcus Aurelius Julius Gessius Bassianus Alexianus Severus Alexander

Maximums I

On the death of Alexander, the German legions hailed Maximinus as

Augustus. He was a man of extraordinary physical size and strength and was well suited to prosecuting the border wars. He raised his son Maximus to the rank of Caesar and honored both his son and deceased wife on coins.

The nobility of Rome were discontent with a barbarian Thracian emperor and Maximinus was faced with revolts of the Gordiani and then Balbinus and

Pupienus. His march against Rome was delayed by the siege of Aquileia, where he was murdered by disaffected troops.



Maximinus I AD235-238 AE sestertius



Paulina, AR denarius (xl.5) wife of Maximinus I



Maximus, AR denarius (xl.5) son of Maximinus I

Aram, Michael, "Die Miinzpragung des Kaisers Maximinus I Thrax (235-38)", *Moneta Imperii Romani* 27, Vienna, 1989.

Casey, James B. "Accession silver of Maximinus Thrax, A.D. 235", *The Celator*, August 1996, pp. 6-14.

Condensed Genealogy

Abada?

Micea?

1^

Caius Julius Verus Maximinus

Gordian I / Gordian II



Gordian I, Africanus AD 238, AR denarius (x1.5)



Gordian II, Africanus AD 238, AR denarius (x1.5)

The Gordiani were from a family of

wealth and distinction in the Roman aristocracy, with large tracts of land in Africa. Under Maximinus I, Gordianus the

elder was appointed to the post of Proconsul in that province and his son, of the same name, was appointed legate. Both father and son had previously served as Consul and were greatly respected. When the rebellion against oppressive taxation by Maximinus reached Africa, Gordian was asked to assume the Purple. Reluctantly, the 81-year-old accepted, and associated his son with him as co-emperor. They were quickly confirmed by the Senate, but forces loyal to Maximinus marched on Carthage and killed the younger Gordian in Battle. His father committed suicide.

The reign of Gordian I and Gordian II lasted only three weeks in the month of April, 238. Their coinage, consequently is very scarce, and gold coins are practically nonexistent.

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

I Marcus Antonius Sempronianus

Gordianus (I)

I

Fabia Orestilla

I

Marcus Antonius Sempronianus Gordianus (II)

Balbinus / Pupienus



Balbinus, AD 238 AR antoninianus (xl.5)

When the Senate heard the news of the death of the Gordiani in Africa,

they found themselves in a crisis. In acknowledging Gordian I and his son, they had declared Maximinus a public enemy. Consequently, the entire Senatorial body was at risk of retribution.

They immediately elected two of their own members, Balbinus and Pupienus, as joint rulers—who were forced by the citizens to raise the surviving young Gordian (III) to the rank of Caesar. Balbinus, an aristocrat, was placed in charge of the administration of the city and of keeping the Praetorian Guard in check. Pupienus, who rose to power through the military, marched north to meet the army of Maximinus. He devastated the countryside, in a scorched earth policy, forcing Maximinus to besiege Aquileia for supplies. This delayed his advance, and in the process Maximinus was murdered by his own troops. Back in Rome, flushed with success, the two emperors tried to increase their control over the praetorians. As a result, they were dragged from the palace by their own guard and murdered. The reign of Balbinus and Pupienus lasted from late April to late July, 238.



Pupienus, AD 238 AR antoninianus (x1.5)

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Caelius Calvinus

Decius Caelius Calvinus Balbinus

Clodius Maximus

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Prima

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Marcus Clodius Maximus Pupienus

Gordian III



Gordian III, AD 238-244 AR antoninianus (x1.5)



Tranquillina

AR antoninianus (x1.25)

wife of Gordian III

Gordian III was the grandson of Gordianus Africanus I, ^u\ the nephew of Gordianus Africanus II. He was proclaimed emperor by the Praetorian

Guard after their murder of Balbintus and

Pupienus. Half of Gordian's reign was

spent in the East in campaigns against the Persians. In 241 he married Julia Sabina Tranquillina, the daughter of his Praetorian Praefect Timesitheus—by that time a prudent step! Little is recorded about the reign of Gordian, but his coinage was expansive, with huge issues throughout the Balkans and Asia. Some of this coinage was obviously struck to pay for major improvements in the roads and defences of Moesia. Imperial coins of Tranquillina are scarce, but Provincial coins are much less so.

Unfortunately, the intensely loyal Timesitheus died (or was killed) in 243. The new Praetorian Praefect, Philip the Arab, was less faithful and arranged for Gordian's murder in February of 244.

Select Bibliography

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Hoard, ANSNNM 156, New York, 1967. Lehmann, K.R Kaiser Gordian III, Berlin, 1911. Noot, Arthur E. "The disruption of the empire: a general focus on the

reign of Gordianus Pius", The Celator, May 1994, pp. 36-39. Thompson, G. Ray. "The Reign of Gordian III", two parts, SAN, VI /

3 & 4, 1975.

Condensed Genealogy

Gordian I

I

Junius Balbus

1

Maecia Faustina

Fabia Orestilla

I

Marcus Antonius Gordianus (III)

Philip I/Philip II



Philip I AD 244-249 AR antoninianus (x1.5)



Philip II, AD 247-249 AE sestertius



Otacilia Severa, AE sestertius wife of Philip I

Marcus Iulius Philippus was the

son of Iulius Marinus; a native leader from the Roman province of Arabia,

and is often referred to as Philip the Arab. He held a high rank in the Praetorian Guard and on the death of Timesthius was raised to Praefect.

Philip was a treacherous aide, and had Gordian murdered at Dura in Mesopotamia. He was hailed Augustus and acknowledged by a totally intimidated Senate. After concluding a favorable peace in the East, he moved north to campaign against barbarian tribes on the Danube—elevating his son, of the same name, as co-ruler.

During Philip's reign the 1000th anniversary of the founding of Rome was celebrated with magnificent games and festivals, commemorated on a series of coins. He was eventually overthrown by the revolt of rebellious legions. Pacatian and Jotapian, failed, but Decius proved to be a formidable adversary and Philip was killed in battle at Verona. His son may have survived at Rome until November of that year.

Select Bibliography

Case, James B. "The mysterious rise and fall of Philip the Arab", *The Delator*, February 1995, pp. 32-37.

Whetstone, William B. "The Saeculares Coinage Struck to Commemorate the Completion of Rome's First Millennium". *SAN*, XVII/2, 1987.

Condensed Genealogy

Julius Marinus

Marcus Julius Philippus (I)

I

Marcia Otacilia Severa

Marcus Julius Philippus (II)

Silbannacus

Unmentioned in the historical record, this ruler is known only from a single coin in the British Museum—dated by style to the end of Philip's reign.

Pacatian / Jotapian



Pacatian, AD 248-249 AR antoninianus (xl.5)



Jotapian, AD 249 AR antoninianus (xl.5)

Tiberius Claudius Marinus Paca-

tianus came from a senatorial family and was an officer on the Danube frontier. In the summer of 248 the legions at Viminacium (Moesia Superior) rebelled and declared Pacatian emperor in opposition to Philip the Arab. Philip sent Decius to crush the uprising, but Pacatian was killed by his own troops before any battle took place. He reigned for only a few weeks, but issued at least two types of hastily struck and rare antoniniani.

Marcus Fulvius Rufus Jotapianus seems to have been related in some way to the Severan Dynasty, but the sources are obscure for this usurper. He revolted against Priscus, the brother of Philip I, somewhere in Eastern Asia Minor or Syria. The revolt lasted only a few months at best and Jotapian was apparently killed by his own troops. Consequently, his coins are very rare.

Select Bibliography

Bland, Roger. "The coinage of Jotapian", *Essays in Honour of Robert Carson and Kenneth Jenkins*, London, 1993, pp. 191-206.

Dembski, Günther. "Ein weiterer Antoninian des Pacatianus", *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Numismatischen Gesellschaft*, 30, Vienna, 1990.

Condensed Genealogy

Tiberius Claudius Marinus Pacatianus

Trajan Decius



Trajan Decius, AD 249-251 AE double sestertius

Decius was born in a village Of Lower Pannonia mu\ through his marriage to the aristocrat Etruscilla, became Consul and governor of Lower Moesia. In response to Pacatian's revolt, he was sent by Philip to restore order on the Danube. There, he was coerced into accepting the title Augustus by acclamation. Marching on Italy, he met Philip at Verona and won a decisive victory there in September, killing Philip and, according to some accounts, his son. It is also possible that Philip II survived at Rome until November.

The victorious Decius assumed the

<v | 1 4 name Trajan, and was warmly received

VT? ^^|p ^^/ W the Roman people. As emperor, he

attempted to reinforce the pagan state religion, and carried out a severe persecution of Christians. He was drawn away to the Danube in 250 to deal with the Goths and elevated his two sons to the rank of Caesar. The campaigning carried over into 251 and, following initial successes, he was lured into a swamp by Kniva, King of the Goths, and ambushed. Decius and his son Etruscus were killed in the fighting.



Herennia Etruscilla

AR antoninianus (x1.5)

wife of Trajan Decius

Select Bibliography

Casey, James B. "Rescuing the past: Trajan Decius (A.D. 249-251), The

Celator f July 1995, pp. 6-12. Clarke, G.W. "Some Observations on the Persecutions of Deems",

Antichton 3,1969, pp. 63-76. \ lever, James. "Focus on Trajan Decius", Roman Coins and Culture, 4 'parts, 1/1 (1985), 2/1,2/2 & 2/3 (1986).

Herennius Ktruseus / Hostilian



Herennius Etruscus, AD 251 AR antoninianus (x1.5)



Hostilian, AD 251 AR antoninianus (x1.5)

Herennius Etruscus was made Caesar in 250 and commanded the Mist army in response to the Gothic invasion. He was joined by his lather, ,and the two managed initial victories which were celebrated by the elevation of Etruscus as co-emperor in May of 251. A month later, he and his father were killed in battle against the Gothic king Kniva at Abrittus. A few coins were struck for Etruscus with the title Augustus, but they are rare.

Hostiian, the younger son of Decius and Etruscilla, remained at Rome as Caesar while his father and brother fought the Goths. There, he was assisted by the future emperor Valerian. When word of the death of Decius and

Etruscus reached Rome, the Senate elevated Hostilian to Augustus. An agreement was reached for him to serve as co-emperor with Trebonianus Gallus, but Hostilian died a few months later of the plague. His coins struck as Augustus are also rare.

Select Bibliography

Mattingly, H. and E.A. Sydenham. The Roman Imperial Coinage, Vol. IV, Pt 1, London, 1936 (Trajan Decius & family, pp. 107-150).

Condensed Genealogy

Trajan Decius

Herennia Cupressiana Etruscilla

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Quintus Messius Decius Herennius Etruscus

Caius Valens Messius Quintus Hostilianus

Trebonianus Gallus / Volusian



Trebonianus Gallus

AD 251-253 AE sestertertius (1.25)



Volusian, AD 252-253 AR antoninianus (x1.5)

Gallus served as a Senator and

Consul prim- to his assignment as Legate of lower Moesia in 250. He

commanded a legion in the campaign against the Goths, and on the death of Decius and Etruscus he was acclaimed emperor by what was left of the Danubian army. Gallus negotiated an unfavorable peace and marched to Rome to seek confirmation of the Senate. As a compromise with the supporters of Decius, he adopted the late emperor's surviving son, Hostilian, and made him co-emperor. He raised his own son, Volusian, to the rank of Caesar. When Hostilian died of the plague in November of that year, Gallus elevated his son to the rank of co-emperor. In 253, the Danubian legions under Aemilian marched on Rome. Gallus was taken by surprise, but met Aemilian in Umbria where his outnumbered and despondent forces mutinied on the eve of battle, killing him and Volusian.

Select Bibliography

Metcalf, William E. "The Antioch hoard of antoniniani and the eastern coinage of Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian", *Museum Notes*, vol. 22, pp. 71-94, ANS, New York, 1977.

Condensed Genealogy

I Trebonianus Gallus

Afinia Gemina Baebiana

I

Caius Vibius Afinius Volusianus

Aemilian



Aemilian, AD 253 AE dupondius (x1.5)

Aemilian was born in Mawetania,

and replaced Trebonianus Gallus as Legate of Lower Moesia. He must have had a successful career to attain such an important position, but history has neglected to inform of the details. It is generally accepted that Cornelia Supera was the wife of Aemilian, but there are no historical records confirming this. Her coins are very rare.

Aemilian led his legions in successful punitive raids across the Danube and the elated troops hailed him as emperor. He immediately marched on Rome, and was about to engage the forces of Trebonianus Gallus when the forces of Gallus defected and killed him and his son.

Aemilian entered Rome unopposed, where he spent the summer. Before long, he was forced to meet a new threat from the north. Valerian, commander of the Rhine legions and former aide to Hostilian, had been acclaimed emperor by his legions and was moving toward Rome. Aemilian met him at Spolegium, but the fate of Gallus and Volusian was to be shared by Aemilian as he was murdered by his outnumbered troops prior to battle.



Cornelia Supera

Antoninianus

wife of Aemilian

Select Bibliography

Mattingly, H. and E.A. Sydenham. The Roman Imperial Coinage, Vol. IV, Pt 1, London, 1936 (Aemilian, pp. 190-202).

Condensed Genealogy

I Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus

II' ranius Antoninus



Uranus Antoninus was a priest/ dynast of Emesa \\\ whose name literally means "heavenly". Although his lineage is obscure, he seems to have been from a family of some importance. When Shapur the Great attacked Emesa in 253, Uranus organized the local guard and repelled the invader. Buoyed by this success, he declared himself emperor and immediately issued coins on the old Syrian standard of Caracalla and Elagabalus. This included gold aurei, billon "tetradrachms" and sestertii sized provincial bronzes. Italo Vecchi has suggested that the post reform radiate "tetradrachms" of his reign are actually Octadrachms (Nummorum Auctiones, No. 6, 9/10 June, 1997, lot 1219, p. 33). The weight and metal purity, coupled with the radiate crown (denomination doubled) form the basis of his argument.

Although the coins of this "emperor" are rare, it is worth noting that the style of execution ranges from quite crude to fully developed— as the specimen illustrated here. It would seem that Uranus did not have access to skilled die engravers at the beginning of his short rule, but managed to import master engravers for subsequent issues.

Uranus Antoninus

AD 253-254,

1 aureus (2)

Select Bibliography

Baldus, Hans Roland. Uranus Antoninus. Münzprägung und

Geschichte, Bonn, 1971. . "Neue Münzen des Uranus Antoninus. Nachtrag I. Chiron,

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Numismatique, 6/1, 1958, pp. 51-57.

Condensed Genealogy

Uranus

I

Lucius Julius Aurelius Sulpicius Uranus Antoninus

Valerian I



Valerian I, AD 253-260 AE sesterlius



Mariniana, AE sesterlius

wife of Valerian I

(died before AD 253)

Valerian had served in several governmental positions, including that of

Censor under Decius. He was serving as Legate of the Rhine under Trebonianus Gallus when summoned to march against the invasion of Aemilian. Being too late to help the hapless Gallus and his son, Valerian accepted the acclamation of his own troops and marched into Rome as the new emperor. He immediately raised his son Gallienus to the rank of co-emperor.

Valerian spent most of his reign in the East repelling Persian advances, and persecuting Christians, while Gallienus administered affairs in the West. Following a foray to Edessa against the Persians, Valerian arranged to meet their king, Shapur, to discuss terms of peace. In an audacious move, Valerian was abducted and carried off to Persia, where he lived another decade under the most humiliating conditions.

Select Bibliography

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King, C.E. "Dated Issues of Valerian and Gallienus from the mint of Rome, AD 253-60", *Essays in Honour of Robert Carson and Kenneth Jenkins*, London, 1993, pp. 207-222.

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Condensed Genealogy

I

Caius Publius Licinius Valerianus

Gallienus

Gallienus took control of the >^^^^V. Rhine frontier in 253 and in 256 named

& ^^ii^v^v ms y oun 8 son Valerian II as Caesar.

yi Jj*^R a The boy died two years later while

campaigning and his younger brother, Saloninus, was then elevated to that rank. The reign of Gallienus was marked by revolts, invasions, plague and every calamity which could befall an empire. Britain and Gaul were lost to Postumus. The East was overrun by Persians and the Balkans were overrun by the Goths. He had also to deal with the Macriani, Rega-lianus and Aureolus. Still, his victories were many, as attested by the coins. He finally was toppled by a conspiracy in 268.



Gallienus, AD 253-268 AV binio (xl.5)



Cornelia Salonina, antoninianus wife of Gallienus



Valerian H, Caesar, antoninianus son of Gallienus

Select Bibliography

Bland, Roger. "The Last Issue of Gallienus from the Mint of Antioch", *Israel Numismatic Journal*, 9, 1988, Jerusalem, pp. 85-90.

Callu, J.-R "The Hama Hoard and the Eastern Mints of Valerian and Gallienus", *Berytus* 17, 1968, pp. 123-142.

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VVeigel, Richard D. "Gallienus' Animal Series Coins and Roman Religion", *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1990, pp. 135-143.

Condensed Genealogy

Valerian I

Egnatius Victor Marinianus I Egnatia Mariniana

I

Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus

Saloninus

Cornelia Salonina Chrysogone

I

I

Publius Cornelius Licinius Valerianus Saloninus

Mac rianis / Quietus



Macrianus, AD 260-261 Antoninianus (xl.5)



Quietus, AD 260-261 Antoninianus (xl.5)

After the capture of Valerian, his

Quartermaster c ienral, Macrianus (the

elder), along with the praetorian praefect Ballista, launched a series of effective counterattacks against the Persians. This caused Shapur to retreat east of the Euphrates. The elated Roman troops offered the purple to Macrianus and Ballista, who opted instead to elevate the two young sons of Macrianus (Macrianus the younger and Quietus).

In 261 the Macriani (elder and younger) marched west to depose Gal-lienus but were both killed in battle against the cavalry commanded by Aureolus. Quietus withdrew farther east to the city of Emesa. There, he was besieged by Odenathus the King of Palmyra—acting on behalf of Gallie-nus. Quietus was executed by the citizens of the city in November of 261 ending the revolt of the Macriani.

The coins of Macrianus and Quietus are fairly scarce, in spite of the existence of a surprising number of reverse types.

Select Bibliography

Krzyanowska, Aleksandra. "Macrianus, usurpateur do temps des guerres perses, dans les emissions monetaires", *Revue Numismatique*, ser. 6, vol. 10, pp. 293-296, 1968.

Condensed Genealogy

Titus Fulvius Junius Macrianus

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T

Titus Fulvius Junius Macrianus

1

Titus Fulvius Junius Quietus

Regalianus



Regalianus, ca. AD 260 Antoninianus (x1.5)



Dryantilla

Antoninianus

wife of Regalianus

Regalianus was the Governor of Pannonia, and commanding general of the troops in Qlyria which suppressed the rebel Ingenuus. In the confused

environment following Valerian's capture he was acclaimed emperor at Carnuntum (on the Danube, east of Vienna) and issued antoniniani in his name and that of his wife Sulpicia Dryantilla. The rarity and crudeness of these coins suggests that they were issued in haste, undoubtedly to raise troops in preparation for the advancing army of Gallienus. Regalianus was defeated and killed by the end of 260.

All of the coins of this usurper and his wife are overstruck on issues of previous rulers (usually Severan denarii). Due to the primitive conditions which must have existed at the Carnuntum mint, they are virtually never found with fully struck images or complete legends.

Select Bibliography

Dembski, Günther. "Neue Antoniniane von Regalianus und Dryantilla", *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Numismatischen Gesellschaft*, 27, Vienna, 1987, pp. 61-63.

Elmer, G. "Regalianus, Dryantilla und ihre Regierungszeiten", *Mitteilungen der Numismatischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, (Vienna) 1930.

Göbi, R. *Regalianus und Dryantilla*, Vienna, 1970.

Mowat, R. "Valerien-Regalien", *Revue Numismatique*, 1900, pp. 86 ff.

Condensed Genealogy

Decabalus?

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1

Publius Cornelius Regalianus

Postumus



Postumus came to power in virtue of his military ability and was appointed commander of the Rhine legions by Valerian I. When Valerian was captured by Shapur, Postumus was heralded as emperor by his troops. Clearing the way for occupation of Gaul, he captured and executed Saloninus, the legitimate emperor.

Ironically, Postumus was able to secure the borders of Gaul and Britain more effectively than his predecessors. This was probably due in part to his native ability as a military leader, but also because he had a limited number of fronts to contend with. His reign lasted a remarkable ten years, in spite of repeated attempts by Gallienus to recover the territory under his control.

The tenth year celebrations, called the decennalia, were elaborate and a special issue of coinage commemorated the event. One of the special issues was a large bronze double sestertius (radiate), which is uncharacteristic of Gallic Empire coinage in general. More often, we see thin ragged bronze antoniniani of very poor execution.

In 269, Postumus put down a revolt by Laelianus but refused to allow his army to sack the city of Mainz which had fallen to siege. He was consequently murdered by a group of angry troops.

Select Bibliography

Bastien, Pierre. *Le monnayage de bronze de Postume*, Wetteren, 1967.

Drinkwater, J.F. *The Gallic Empire: Separatism and Continuity in the North-Western Provinces of the Roman Empire, A.D. 260-274*, Wiesbaden, *Historia, Einzelschriften* 52, pp. 276ff.

Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Cassianus Latinus Postumus

Aureolus

As a cavalry officer under Gallienus, Aureolus crushed the revolt of the Macriani in Asia Minor and was then assigned to guard northern Italy against the usurper Postumus. He ultimately joined forces with Postumus and was acclaimed emperor at Milan. While responding to the defection, Gallienus was murdered by partisans on his own staff. This accomplished little, however, as the new emperor, Claudius II, had Aureolus executed immediately. There are no portrait coins of this rebel. Coins supposedly struck

for him at the Milan mint bear the inscription and portrait of Postumus. See: P. Bastien, "L'atelier de Milan en 268", *La Zecca di Milano*, 1984, pp. 133-45.

Laelianus



Laelianus, AD 269 AV aureus (x1.5)

The background of this Gallic emperor is obscure, but we can surmise from his name Ulpus, that he was perhaps a relative of the emperor Trajan. Laelianus seems to have served as governor of Lower Germany under Postumus and revolted against him from a stronghold of Legion XXX Ulpia in Mainz. This rebellion took place at about the same time Claudius II was pushing against the southern borders

of the Gallic Empire. Postumus responded in force and crushed the rebellion, but the aftermath led to his own demise.

Select Bibliography

Elmer, G. "Die Münzprägung der Gallischen Kaiser in Köln, Trier und Mailand", *Bonner Jahrbücher*, CXLVI, 1941, pp. 1-106.

Condensed Genealogy

Ulpus Cornelius Laelianus

Domitianus of (.mil

Known from a single antoninianus found at Quous, France m^a published in *Revue Numismatique*, 1 L K)1 — also in *RIC Vol V*, Part II, p. 590.

There is no historical record of this ruler, but it has been conjectured that he was a general involved in the defeat of the Macriani. Some see it as a modern forgery. See: Lawrence Okamura, "Forging a Usurper in Late Roman Aquitania", *Hermes, Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie*, 120, 1992, pp. L03-109.

Marius

Marcus Aurelius Marius was an officer in the Rhine legion who assumed power on the death of Postumus. He ruled briefly, before being killed by his own troops—but certainly more than the two or three days once suggested in numismatic references. It is mentioned by historians that he was a blacksmith, and made particularly fine swords. He was supposedly murdered with a sword of his own making. The coins of Marius are rare, but not particularly so. One of his issues, with reverse bearing the image of clasped hands, alludes to the restoration of concord between the armies of Postumus and Laelianus. His coins were struck at Cologne and an uncertain mint.



Marius, AD 269 Antoninianus (x1.5)

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Aurelius Marius

Victorinus



Victorinus, AD 269-271 AE antoninianus (x1.5)

Victorinus was a member of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy and served as Consul under Postumus in 267. Following the death of his former colleague, Victorinus was hailed emperor by his forces and moved against Marius. He captured Cologne, and after the assassination of Marius he extended control

over the remainder of the Gallic Empire.

Following a short reign, Victorinus was murdered, reportedly by the vengeful husband of a woman he had supposedly seduced. He had spent most of his reign attempting to check the advance forces of Claudius Gothicus—including a seven month siege of Autun which had fallen to Gothicus. The mother of Victorinus, apparently named Vitruvia or Victoria, must have been a powerful political force as she is credited with selecting the successor, Tetricus.

Although he did not reign for an extended period, coinage of Victorinus is common due to the large hoards of Gallic empire radiates found in France and Germany. The types are varied and the series is fairly well developed.

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Found at Wiesbaden", *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1967, pp. 49-59.

Condensed Genealogy

Vitruvia (Victoria)

I

1

Marcus Piavonius Victorinus

Tetricus I/Tetricus II



Tetricus I AD 271-274 AV aureus (x1.5)



Tetricus II

antoninianns (x1.5)

son of Tetricus I

Tetricus was serving as governor of Aquitaine when he was called upon by the mother of Victorinus to accept her

slain son's throne. Following the formal consecration of Victorinus, he set about restoring the torn Gallic Empire. It is known that Tetricus raised his son, of the same name, to the rank of Caesar in 273, but the rank of Tetricus II has been a problem historically and numismatically for many years. Only recently has there been reasonable evidence that the son was ever elevated to the rank of Augustus. If so, this must have occurred only in the very latter days of their reign.

In spite of the pressures by German tribes and dissention with the army, Tetricus and his son held on until 274. Finally, they surrendered the throne to Aurelianus, who allowed them to abdicate peacefully and treated them with unusual respect. The elder Tetricus was even restored to the Senate and given the governorship of Lucania.

Select Bibliography

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Sutherland, C.H.V. "An Unpublished Coin in the Name of Tetricus II", *ANS Museum Notes*, XI, New York, 1964, pp. 151-158.

Condensed Genealogy

I Caius Pius Esuvius Tetricus (I)

I Caius Pius Esuvius Tetricus (II)

Claudius II / Quintillus



Claudius II, Gothicus

AD 268-270 Antoninianus (x1.5)



Quintillus, AD 270 Antoninianus (x1.5)

The coins of Claudius II and Quintillus are not as rare as one

Marcus Aurelius Claudius was

born in Illyricum and was a successful legionary commander under Gallienus. He helped suppress the rebellion of Ingenuus, and marched to Milan to depose Aureolus. Instead, Claudius joined the conspiracy which murdered Gallienus, and was proclaimed emperor himself. He executed Aureolus, and, following the suppression of Alemanni in northern Italy, proceeded to Rome where he obtained the support of the Senate.

Claudius recovered Spain from the Gallic Empire in 269, but could not reduce Gaul, as he was preoccupied by the Goths in Greece and the Balkans. He died of the plague in 270 while attempting to repair damage in the East.

Claudius was succeeded by his brother, Quintillus, who was proclaimed emperor by the Pannonian troops. After only two months, the troops deserted

him to support Aure-lian, and Quintillus committed suicide, plentiful and varied in type. Those of might suspect for such a short reign.

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

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I

Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius Gothicus

7

I

Marcus Aurelius Claudius Quintillus

Aurelian



Aurelitm, AD 270-275 A n t onini anus (xl.25)



Severina, Antoninianus (xl.25) wife of Aurelian

Like his predecessor; Aurelian was

bom in Illvricum, and rose to power through the Roman cavalry. 1 le also participated in the conspiracy to assassinate Gallienus. He was proclaimed

emperor by his troops on the death of Claudius and after the suicide of Quintillus, became the uncontested ruler of all but the Gallic Empire and the Palmyrene Kingdom in the East. Exhibiting great military and political ability, he recovered the lands ruled by Zenobia, and then induced the surrender of the Tetrici in Gaul. With peace on the borders, he began construction of a major defensive wall around the city of Rome.

Aurelian elevated his wife Severina to the rank of Augusta in about 274 and she appears on coins of all metals. In spite of the successes of his reign, he fell to a conspiracy of officers and was murdered in Thrace.

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Condensed Genealogy

Lucius Domitius Aurelianus

Vabalathus



Vabalathus, AD 271-272 Antoninianus (xl.5)



Zenobia, Antoninianus

Queen of Palmyra mother of Vabalathus

Zenobia was the second wife of the

King of Palmyra, Odenathus. While Gallienus and his successors dealt with

problems on their northern borders, Odenathus quietly expanded the kingdom of Palmyra into the Roman provinces of Asia, Arabia, and Africa. His assassination in 267 left Zenobia in control of a vast empire. She elevated her son Vabalathus to joint rule and managed the affairs of state quite well.

Aurelian, in a diplomatic gesture, recognized Vabalathus with important titles and a special coinage, but the elevation of Vabalathus to Augustus by Palmyrene troops forced Aurelian to action. He defeated Zenobia and Vabalathus and took the rulers to Rome as captives. Zenobia was exhibited in golden chains during Aurelian's Triumph, and then given a comfortable villa in Italy where she retired.

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Condensed Genealogy

Julius Aurelius Zenobius

I

Septimia Zenobia

I

Lucius Julius Aurelius Septimius Athenodorus Vabalathus



Tacitus, AD 275-276 A n t o n i n i a n u s (x1.5)



Florianus, AD 276 AV aureus (x1.5)

The traditional account, that the elderly Tacitus was chosen by the Senate tree of pressure from the army, has been brought into question in recent years as scholars study this period. It is a fact, however, that Tacitus was a member of the Senate, and that he served as Consul in 273. He was elected emperor in September of 275. He at least claimed to be a descendent of the famous historian, and he joined the army on campaign in Asia Minor, along with his half-brother Florianus, who had been appointed Praetorian Praefect. He also appointed a relative as Governor in Syria. Few other facts are known. Following a victory against the Goths, Tacitus apparently died of natural causes (a rare event in itself) in Cappadocia in April, 276.

Florianus was hailed emperor and ruled for two months before being murdered by a band of his own troops as they prepared to face the army of Probus who opposed his accession.

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Condensed Genealogy

Publius Cornelius Tacitus ?

1

Marcus Claudius Tacitus

Marcus Annius Florianus

Probus



Probus, AD 276-282 AV aureus (xl.5)

Probus, the son of a soldier, was born in the Balkans and rose to prominence in the military. He was commanding a Legion at the time of Tacitus' death and was proclaimed Augustus by his troops. Probus moved against Florianus, but the murder of that contender left him unchallenged. Most of his reign was spent with the army on campaign—a place that Probus would probably have preferred to be. He visited Rome as infrequently as possible, and did not overstay his visits. His coins emulated the types of Aurelian, and were issued in very great numbers. Antoniniani of Probus are among the most common of ancient Roman coins. Fortunately, they are also interesting historically, and occasionally artistically.

Following revolts of Proculus, Bonosus and Saturninus, Probus attempted to improve discipline among the troops. In doing so, he incurred their rancor. They had been employed in the ambitious public works program instituted by Probus and were already discontent. The rising popularity of Carus, and the likelihood of another confrontation must have been ominous. Probus was murdered, like so many emperors of his time, by a rebellious faction at Sirmium in September of 282.

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Condensed Genealogy

Delmatius Probus

Marcus Aurelius Equitius Probus

Bonosus / Saturninus



Bonosus, ca. AD 250 Billon antoninianus (x1.5)



Saturninus, ca. AD 280 AY aureus (x1.5)

Bonosus rebelled against Probus about 280, apparently in fear of reprisal far tailed campaigns against the Germanic tribes. He was quickly eliminated, but seems to have left a numismatic record of his brief attempt to rule. The coins attributed to him are highly controversial, very rare and resemble the barbarous radiates of the period— poorly struck and of very poor design.

The life and reign of the usurper Saturninus are very obscure. He was a highly regarded general, and was assigned by Aurelian to command the Roman armies of the eastern provinces. About AD 280, in opposition to Probus, he was acclaimed emperor by his troops at Alexandria. He struck a very few coins, in gold, perhaps at Antioch or at Alexandria.

Probus responded in force, and following a bitter struggle, Saturninus was apparently murdered at Apamea by one of his own men.

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Condensed Genealogy

? I

Quintus Bonosus

? I

Sextus Julius Saturninus

Carus / Numerian



Carus, AD 282-283 AV aureus (x1.5)

Carus had risen through the ranks to the position of Praetorian Praefect

under Probus, and was undoubtedly responsible for the rebellion that ended

Probus' life. He was acclaimed emperor without opposition. Before the end of the year, Carus had elevated his two grown sons to the rank of Caesar. Carus, and his younger son Numerian, were to share the Eastern provinces and Carinus was to rule those in the West.

After their initial success against the Sarmations, Carus and Numerian set out on a campaign against the Persians. On the way (at Antioch) the two sons were elevated to the rank of Augustus. The campaign went exceedingly well, with the Romans taking the Persian capital of Ctesiphon, but Carus was killed by lightning near the Persian capital in July, 283. Carus was honored with the title "Parthicus" posthumously. Numerian remained in Persia into the next year, but on the return to Cyzicus in November 284, he was found dead in his litter. The Praetorian Praefect, Aper, was accused and executed.



Numerian, AD 283-284 AV aureus (x1.5)

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Condensed Genealogy

I Marcus Aurelius Carus

Marcus Aurelius Numerianus

108

Carinus



Carinus, AD 283-285 AV aureus (x1.5)

The elder son of Carus was successful in pacifying the Danube frontier, and returned to Rome in 284 where he issued coins

celebrating the Persian victories of his father and brother. He was married to Magnia Urbica and had a son by the name of Numerian, both of whom predeceased him. Coins struck in their honor are very rare.

Carinus was faced, immediately after the death of his brother, with the usurpation of Julian and the proclamation of Diocletian as Augustus. He easily defeated the former in a

battle near Verona, and went on to meet Diocletian's army in Moesia. Following a fierce battle, Diocletian withdrew. The victory was fleeting,

however, as Carinus was assassinated after the battle by one of his own officers in a personal vendetta.



Nigrinian

AE antoninianus

son of Carinus



Magnia Urbica

AE antoninianus

wife of Carinus

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Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Aurelius Carus

Marcus Aurelius Carinus

Julian of Pannonia

Marcus Aurelius Sabinus [ulianus was the senior Roman official in Venice under the administration of Can-

nus. After the death of C larius, and the return of Carinus to Rome, fulian saw

an opportunity to gain control. He raised an army in Pannonia, and had himself proclaimed emperor in 284. Encouraged by the death of Numerian, and the revolt of Diocletian, Julian marched toward Rome in late 284 or early 285. He was met at Verona, in northern Italy, by Carinus. Julian's forces were easily defeated, and he was slain in the battle. The coins struck by Julian of Pannonia are all from the mint of Siscia and are very rare.



Julian of Pannonia AD 284-5 AUREUS (x1.5)

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Numismaticke

Condensed Genealogy

1

Marcus Aurelius Sabinus Julianus

Amandus

Cnaeus Silvius Amandus is known as a usurper (ca. AD 285-6) in the historical record. See: A.H.M. Jones and J.R. Martindale, *The Prosopography Of The Later Roman Empire*, Vol 1, AD 260 - 395, Cambridge, 1971, p. 50. He was supposedly raised to the rank of Augustus by the peasants of Gaul, along with a certain Aelianus. The rebellion was suppressed by Maximian, the future colleague of Diocletian. No coins are reported of Aelianus, but RIC lists three possible coins of Amandus— only one of which can be confirmed. That specimen is the one subsequently listed in *Roman Coins and Their Values* as #3554. This coin has apparently not been condemned, but neither has it been confirmed by other discoveries. It must therefore be considered with reservation.

Diocletian



Diocletian, AD 284-305 AR argenteus (xl.5)

Diocletian was a Dalmatian by birth and rose to power through the military. He served as governor of

Moesia, and later as commander of the *protectores domestici*, the emperor's personal guard, under Constantine and Numerian. It was Diocletian that accused Aper of murdering Numerian, and personally executed him. Diocletian was then raised by the Army of Numerian to the rank of Augustus. His administrative abilities outshined even his military skill. Over the course of his reign, Diocletian implemented reforms and put policies into place that completely changed the nature of the empire. One of his innovations was the tetrarchy, a system of administration which divided the empire between two Augusti, each with a subordinate but detached Caesar. These became the houses of Jupiter and Hercules. His monetary reforms and price controls re-established fiscal stability following a long period of rampant inflation. As part of a plan to assure peaceful succession, Diocletian and his co-emperor, Maximian, abdicated their positions on May 1, 305. Diocletian retired to private life and died at his villa in Dalmatia in 316.

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Condensed Genealogy

Carausius / Allectus



Carausius, AD 287-293 AR denarius (x1.5)



Allectus, AD 293-296 AE antoninianus (x1.5)

Carausius was born into a Gallic

tribe which lived near the mouth of the

Rhine. Rising through the ranks of the

Roman navy, he became a general under Maximian and enriched himself

through plunder of local shipping. He was condemned by Maximian, but escaped to Britain where he won over the legion garrisoned there and was proclaimed emperor. The reign of Carausius is somewhat exceptional in that he managed to gather substantial support, extending his sphere of influence into Gaul, and was actually recognized to some degree by Diocletian and Maximian.

Following the loss of Boulogne to Constantius I, Carausius was assassinated by his chief minister, a man named Allectus. Allectus ruled in Britain for a short time until that province also fell to the army of Constantius.

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Condensed Genealogy

I

Marcus Aurelius

Mausaeus Carausius

?

I

Caius Allectus

Domitius Domitianus



Domitianus Domitianus AD 296-(7?)-298, AE follis

About 294, Diocletian began producing Imperial style folles at Alexandria, which had for three centuries been on a closed system of Greek-style

coinage—that is, billon or bronze tetradrachms and their corresponding denominations. The change added to growing discontent, which reached a crisis when Lucius Domitius Domitianus seized power about 296 or 297. It is difficult to determine the actual beginning of his usurpation. Coins struck in his name indicate that this historical figure was declared Augustus. However, the literary evidence ascribes the rebellion to one Aurelius Achilleus. The

latter was apparently an assistant to Domitianus. Some have suggested that the two are one and the same person, but based on the ancient sources this seems unlikely. Diocletian marched to Egypt to suppress the rebellion, but Domitianus (or Achilleus) held Alexandria against siege for eight months. It finally fell in the Spring of 298. Another suggestion has been that Achilleus was in charge of the defense of Alexandria, and replaced Domitianus who ostensibly died during the siege. The actual conditions are extremely obscure, but the coins are quite uniformly struck, and are surprisingly obtainable for such an obscure usurper.

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Condensed Genealogy

Lucius Domitius Domitianus

Maximianus



Maximianus,

AD 286-310 intermittently

AE follis

Diocletian raised Maximian to the rank of co-emperor in 286 following the latter's successful suppression of the

uprising in Gaul. Maximian was placed in charge of administration of

the West, from Milan, while Diocletian retained administration of the East for himself. The system allowed for much

better control of emergencies and was expanded in 293 when Constantius I was made Caesar under Maximian, and Galerius was named as Caesar under Diocletian. In 305, acquiescing to the will of Diocletian, Maximian joined his colleague in abdicating his throne. The reigning Caesars were elevated, while two new Caesars were appointed to fill the vacancy. All went well until the death of Constantius in 306, and the arbitrary elevation of his son Constantine as Augustus. Not to be slighted, Maximian's son Maxentius had himself proclaimed Augustus as well, and asked his father to return from retirement. Maximian eagerly accepted the purple for a second time and feuding between the emperors increased to dangerous levels. A conference was held in 308, with the retired Diocletian's guidance, and Maximian was forced to abdicate once again. In the Spring of 310, the insatiable Maximian rebelled again, and was once more proclaimed emperor. He was besieged and captured at Massilia by Constantine and was either executed or committed suicide.

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Condensed Genealogy

Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus

Constantius I



Constantius I, AD 305-306 AVaureus (x1.5)

Constantius was

an aristocrat from Dardania, a district along the Hellespont. He was a successful military commander, served as Praetorian Praefect, and was

elevated to Caesar under Maximian in 293. In order to insure a stronger bond between the emperor and his heir, Constantius was obligated to divorce his first wife, Helena, and marry Theodora—the step-daughter of Maximian. Constantius and Helena had a child, named Constantine, who later became the famous emperor.

Constantius was assigned to rule over Gaul and Britain, the strongholds of the usurper Carausius. His headquarters was located at Trier. Through brilliant tactics and fine leadership, he captured Boulogne and pushed Carausius out of Gaul. In 296 he invaded Britain and easily recovered the province from Allectus, who had murdered Carausius after the retreat from Boulogne. Constantius maintained a close relationship with Constantine, who accompanied him on many campaigns and rose quickly in the army. Constantius had just completed a campaign against the Picts when he died at York in 305. Without consulting the co-emperor Galerius, the Gallic and British legions raised Constantine to the rank of Augustus. This started an imperial feud of serious proportions.

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Condensed Genealogy

Eutropia

Claudius Gothicus? I Claudia

1st Flavius Valerius Constantius (Chlorus)

Galerius



Galerius, AD 305-311 AEFollis



Galeria Valeria, AEFollis

daughter of Diocletian

2nd wife of Galerius

As Constantius I was Praetorian Praefect to Maximian, so too did Galerius serve Diocletian in that capacity. He was elevated to Caesar in 2 C H at the same time as Constantius. Galerius handled affairs in Greece and the Balkans from his headquarters in Thessalonica, while Diocletian maintained court at Nicomedia in Asia Minor. The entire empire was covered by these four capable leaders. Like the marriage of Constantius and Fausta, Galerius was obliged to marry Galeria Valeria, the daughter of Diocletian, in order to better cement the ties between him and Diocletian. All of this intermarrying was intended to forestall the power struggles that had plagued the army and the imperial palace for years.

Galerius was born near Serdica, and had served with distinction under Aurelian and Probus. He died while returning to his native village for a visit and was buried there.

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Condensed Genealogy

Romula

Caius Valerius Maximianus Galerius

Severus 11



Sevens 11 AD 306-307 AE follis

Flavins Valerius Severus was a native of Qlyricum and was promoted to the rank of Caesar by Galerius in 305. He was placed in charge of affairs in Italy and Africa. On the death of Constantius, he was elevated to the rank of Augustus. He was elected Consul in 307 and was also served that year as Proconsul of Africa.

By this time, Constantine and Maxentius were also claiming the rank of emperor, so this left four "augusti" contending for two positions. Severus was dispatched to depose Maxentius in Rome, but when he set out from Milan his army defected to Maxentius and Severus was saved only by fleeing to Ravenna. He surrendered in exchange for a promise of pardon, but was executed by Maxentius in Rome nonetheless.

The coinage of Severus II is a bit more scarce than the other members of the Tetrarchy, due perhaps to his brevity of reign. Still, he was honored on coinage from at least 14 mint cities, in denominations of all metals. In addition to the Folles, his bronze denominations include the post-reform radiate, the bronze denarius and the bronze quinarius. With all of these possibilities, one would think that his coinage should not be too rare, but it is certainly not that common in the collector market.

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Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Valerius Severus

Maximums II



Maximinus 11, AD 309-313 AEFollis (xl.25)

The mother of Maximinus I (Maia) (often spelled Daza) was the sister of (Galerius). Her son was born in Bithynia on the day that Galerius was elevated to the throne. Rising through the ranks of the military, he became an imperial body guard of Galerius and was named Caesar in 305. On this occasion, he was also adopted by Galerius and changed his name to Galerius Valerius Maximinus.

nus.

Maximinus was headquartered in Antioch, and was responsible for the administration of Syria and Egypt. He was hoping to be elevated to the rank of Augustus along with Licinius in 308, but he and Constantine received instead the unusual title "Filius Augustorum". This title did little to satisfy him, and he refrained from using it on coins struck in his provinces. It sat even less well with Constantine, who was stripped of the title Augustus bestowed on him when his father died.

Maximinus was made co-emperor in 310 and moved his capital to Nicomedia the next year when Galerius died. He was deposed by Licinius in 313 and committed suicide a few months later. His coins as Augustus are sometimes difficult for the novice to distinguish from those of Galerius. The inscriptions are similar (GAL VAL MAXIMINUS PF AVG vs. GAL VAL MAXIMIANUS PF AVG).

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Condensed Genealogy

Romula

I

Caius Galerius Valerius Daia Maximinus

Maxentius



Maxentius, AD 306-312 AEFollis (x1.25)

the son of Maximian was born

about 279. When Diocletian established the Tetrarchy, Maxentius was

married to Maximilla, the daughter of Galerius (Diocletian's Caesar). They had a son by the name of Romulus, who died in 309.

When Diocletian and Maximian abdicated, Maxentius was not elevated to the rank of Caesar, but retired to Rome with the hollow title Princeps. In 306, the people of Rome revolted against taxation by Galerius and proclaimed Maxentius Augustus. Severus II was sent to depose Maxentius, but failed. Maxentius then recalled his father from retirement. Together, they repelled an attack by Galerius but then had a falling out and Maximian fled to Gaul. Maxentius found himself alone against a host of imperial enemies, as well as a revolt in Africa. He finally was overcome by Constantine

I and died at the famous battle of the Milvian Bridge, outside of Rome,

on October 28, 312.



Romulus, AEFollis

son of Maxentius

(d. AD 309)

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Maximianus

I

Galeria Valeria Eutropia

I

1^ Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius

Alexander of Carthage

£&£



Alexander, AD 308-310 AEfolles (x1.25)

L. Domitius Alexander was bom in Pannonia, ^md was assigned to Africa as the imperial representative late in his career. \\v is an obscure figure in the historical record, but we know that in 308 he was declared emperor by his troops—in opposition to \\la\\-entius. This was a matter of critical concern to the latter since Africa supplied the grain that fed Rome.

Asa foe of Maxentius, and in light of an inscription found in Africa, he seems to have been allied, at least rhetorically, with Constantine. In 310, Maxentius sent forces to Carthage deposing the usurper, who was captured and put to death.

Alexander managed to hold Africa and Sardinia for a remarkably long period, but his coinage is rare nevertheless. It includes a gold aureus of extreme

rarity, and a few types struck in bronze or billon. The reverse types of folles struck for Alexander include personifications of Carthage and Africa, as well as one type portraying Alexander on horseback.

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Condensed Genealogy

Lucius Domitius Alexander



Licinius I AD 308-324 AE folles(x2)



Licinius II, AV aureus; Constantia, AE-3

[The imperial mess that the Tetrarchy had evolved into by 308 prompted Galerius to call a conference at Carnuntum, during which Maxentius was declared a public enemy, Constantine was reduced from Augustus to Caesar, and Valerius Licinianus Licinius was installed as Augustus of the West. Licinius fought with Galerius against the Persians and became a close friend.

Initially, Licinius and Constantine were allies. In 313, he was married to Constantia, the half-sister of Constantine, under the now familiar tetrarchic marital politics. They had a son, Licinius II, who was raised by his father to the rank of Caesar in 317. Following the victory over Maximinus, Licinius and Constantine ruled jointly, if not happily so, for a decade. Inevitably, the two clashed. The outcome was decided at Chrysopolis, where Constantine prevailed. He allowed Licinius to retire, but later had him executed for conspiracy.

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Condensed Genealogy

Valerianus Licinianus Licinius

21

Valens / Martinian



Valens, AD314 AEfollis (xl.25)



Martinian, AD 324 Antoninianus (xl.25)

Aurelius Valerius Valens was a successful general in the West, under the authority of Licinius. During the conflict between Constantine and Licinius in 314, Valens was elevated to the purple as a means for Licinius to assure the loyalty of those troops. Shortly thereafter, under terms of a negotiated peace,

the hapless Valens was deposed and executed. Coins in his name are exceedingly rare.

Martinian was Magister Officiorum under Licinius, and was raised to the purple in 324. The ensuing battle of Chrysopolis left him and Licinius devoid of power and at the mercy of Constantine. The two were spared temporarily, through the intercession of Constantia, the wife of Licinius and half-sister of Constantine, but both were eventually executed to avoid any possibility of return to power. Like the coins of Valens, those of Martinian are extremely rare.

Select Bibliography

Note:

Brief references to the roles of Valens and Martinian will be found in a variety of works on the life of Constantine. The historical record supplies only incidental dates and titles. We are unaware of any scholarly work dedicated to either of these generals. See RIC vol. VII for their coins.

Constantine I



Constantine I AD 307-337

AY soli tin s



Fausta, AV solidus daughter of Maximian



Helena, AE follis mother of Constantine



Crispus, Caesar, AF follis

son of Constantine and

Minervina

Because of his decision to admit Christianity as a state religion, Constantine the Great has become one of history's most studied figures. There are countless biographies and articles about his life.

He was born about 272 at Naissus, near the Danube, the son of Constantius (Chlorus) and Helena. His father was a Roman army officer (later to be emperor) and his mother a Bithynian of humble origin. Constantine grew up in army camps and was 21 when his father was elevated to the rank of Caesar. At that point Constantine was sent to Diocletian's court as heir presumptive.

The turmoil of politics under the tetrarchy demanded a resolute constitution and above all, Constantine prevailed. Among the many accomplishments of his reign, two events loom particularly large. He was the first emperor to allow, and possibly adopt, Christianity as an official religion. Prior to the battle of the Milvian Bridge, he reportedly saw a vision in the heavens which directed him to carry the sign of Christ into battle. His victory under that banner provided the inspiration for an entirely new iconography in official art and coinage.

He also built a new capital to serve the Eastern Roman Empire, and named it Constantinople. Both of these acts had a monumental impact on the history of Western culture and civilization.

The story of Constantine's life is filled with mystery, intrigue, passion and horror. His extensive coinage serves as a study in official propaganda. He fell ill and died near Nicomedia in 337—already a legend.



Delmatius, Caesar

AE reduced follis

nephew of Constantine



Hannibalianus, Rex

AE reduced follis

nephew of Constantine

The brothers Delmatius and Hannibalianus were nephews of Constantine through his half-brother Flavius Delmatius. In AD 335, Constantine elevated Delmatius to the rank of Caesar, and Hannibalianus to the rank of Rex (King) of Armenia, Pontus and Cappadocia. This title had not been held by any Roman since 509 BC—excluding Vabalathus, who was Palmyran. The brothers were caught up in the jealousy and enmity of Constantine's sons and were executed after his death.

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Constantino II



Constantine II, AD 337-340

AVIS soliiii

Although regarded by many historians as the son of Constantine and Fausta, Constantine Junior was apparently an illegitimate, but fully recognized, son of Constantine. He was younger than Crispus, but older than Constantius II (Constantine's oldest son by Fausta). He was named Caesar as an infant (AD 317) and held a number of military commands while still in his teens. Following the death of his father, he was elevated along with his half-brothers Constantius II and Constans to the rank of Augustus. Constantius II ruled in the East, while Constantine II ruled in the West. The youngest brother, Constans was placed under the regency of Constantine II, and given the administration of Italy and North Africa. An extensive series of coins was issued in the names of all three brothers—both as Caesar and Augustus.

Under their father, Christianity had been made "a" state religion, these brothers entrenched it as "the" state religion. The church, however, was engaged in a bitter internal struggle of its own—requiring high level imperial diplomacy. Also, Constantine II and Constans became embroiled in a bitter dispute over the authority of the younger brother. Finally, in 340, Constantine II marched south with an army to quiet his brother's rebellion. He was met by the combined forces of Constans and Constantius II at Aquileia and was killed in battle.

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Constans



Constans, AD 337-350 AE centenionalis (xl.25)

Flavius Julius Constans was born in 323. The youngest son of Constantine the Great and Fausta was raised to the rank of Caesar in 333, and elevated to Augustus along with Constantine II and Constantius II in 337. Because he was only 14 years old, he was placed under the regency of his oldest brother. This lasted only three years before the two clashed and Constantine II was killed. Constans then assumed control of the entire West. He was successful in pacifying the Rhine, and campaigned in Britain against the Picts and Scots in 343. He celebrated the 1100th anniversary of the founding of Rome with games and festivals in 348.

Constans initially escaped during the revolt of Magnentius, when he discovered that the legions had acclaimed the usurper Augustus. Hoping to reach the safety of Spain, he was subsequently captured in southern Gaul and killed.

The coinage of Constans seems to be less common than that of Constantius II, but coins of both are readily available to collectors. During his reign the Centenionalis was introduced with the "Fel Tern Reparatio" theme on its reverse. This is a popular topical theme as there are several iconographic variations with appealing motifs. Also of particular topical interest is an unusual astrological issue depicting the Phoenix.

Select Bibliography

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*See the general surveys listed under Constantine II

Constantius II



Constantius II, AD 337-361

AV solidus (x2)

Following the death of Constantine in 337, his son Constantius inherited the East as his share of the empire.

He was a ruthless but able administrator and quickly eliminated all other potential claimants to the throne. Even before the sons of Constantine were crowned, they undertook a purge that vastly reduced the number of male survivors in the family. By 350, Constantius had only the usurper Magnentius left to deal with.

He elevated his cousin Gallus to Caesar, and after three years of marginal success, finally defeated Magnentius. Meanwhile, the oppression of Gallus at Antioch led to bitter complaints and Constantius had him arrested and executed. A Persian incursion forced him back to the East, leaving another cousin, Julian, as Caesar in the West. In his absence, Julian won the acclaim of the legions in Paris. After dealing with the Persian situation, Constantius set off one more time for the West, but died enroute at Cilicia—perhaps of malaria, notoriously rampant in that province.



Constantius Gallus, Caesar

AD 351-354

AE centenionalis (x1.25)

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Constantius I Helena Maximian Galeria Valeria Eutropia

Constantine

, 1

Flavia Maxima Fausta

Flavius Julius Constantius

Magnentius



Magnentius, AD 350-353 AE centenionalis (xl.25)

Magnentius was a soldier of great skill whose career began under the reign of Constantine the Great. He was

of barbarian origin, but became a high ranking officer in the army under Constantians and Constantius II. His great

popularity among the troops, in contrast to the inattentive rule of Constantians,

led to his being proclaimed emperor in

350. In 351, he elevated his brother Decentius to the rank of Caesar.

Originally, Magnentius controlled Britain, Spain, Gaul and Italy. Failing to win the acceptance of Constantius II, he turned his attention to the Balkans where his advance was checked by Vetranio. Meanwhile, Constantius was able to move west and defeated the army of Magnentius first at Mursa and then at Aquileia. Finally, after three years of gains and losses, the retreating army was subjected to a crushing defeat in Gaul and Magnentius committed

suicide. Decentius, on hearing
the news, took his own life as well.

The coins of Magnentius and Decentius are fairly common, but one reverse type bearing a large Christogram J3 is exceptionally popular and consequently in constant demand. ^



Decentius, Caesar

AD 351-353

AE centenionalis (xl.25)

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Magnus Magnentius

Vetranio



Yctranio, AD 350 AE centenionalis (xl.5)

Vetranio's Legions were caught up on the death of Constans with a choice between supporting Magnentius or Constantius II. They opted instead to elevate their own general Vetranio as emperor. Constantia, the half-sister of Constantine the Great and former wife of Licinius, was still living at the time, and invested the purple on Vetranio— giving his reign an illusion of

legitimacy.

Vetranio was effective in checking the advance of Magnentius into the Balkans, but it is uncertain whether he expressed his loyalty to Constantius II immediately, or only after any hopes to retain the throne faded with the return of Constantius from the East. He was an elderly man, at any rate, and Constantius chose to spare him. Vetranio formally abdicated in the presence of the emperor— prostrating himself according to some accounts—and was allowed to retire to a private villa on a generous pension. The leniency of Constantius, not typically known for such lapses, suggests that the brief reign of Vetranio may have been planned, or at least that Vetranio was acknowledged as an ally.

The coinage of Vetranio has always been quite rare, but several years ago new specimens began to appear on the market in reasonable quantities—probably from a find in the Balkans. The coins of this usurper are still scarce, but not so rare as previously thought.

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Condensed Genealogy

Vetranio

Nepotian



Nepotian, AD 350 AE centenionalis (x1.25)

Flavius Julius Popilius Nepotianus was the son of Constantine the Great's half-sister Eutropia. He was a very young child at the time of the purges following Constantine's death, and consequently was spared. Considering his good fortune, Nepotian should have stayed out of imperial politics—but at the time of Constantine's death he apparently saw an opportunity for fame and fortune.

He declared himself emperor on June 3rd, 350, and attacked Rome with a group of gladiators. After only 28 days, he was captured by the forces of

Magnentius and killed. His head was placed on a spike and paraded around the city.

Nepotian was one of the few emperors of the period to be depicted with a beard. This was apparently a fashion of non-Christian men, and it has been assumed therefore, that Nepotian was pagan in his beliefs. This is difficult to determine from the coinage, because his gold issue includes Christograms in the composition. Also featured on his coinage are Roma and Victory, traditional pagan images. This does not, of course, argue for or against Nepotian's own beliefs. It would seem to indicate, however, that he at least did not advocate the persecution of Christians during his brief reign.

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Condensed Genealogy

Constantius I

Theodora

Virius Nepotianus

Eutropia

Flavius Julius Popilius Nepotianus

Julian II



Flavius Claudius Julianus is referred to variously as Julian the Philosopher or Julian the Apostate. He was as a prolific author, with an excellent education,

Julian was a nephew of Constantine the Great and a half-brother of Constantius Gallus. When Gallus was executed, Julian was named Caesar and sent to Gaul to command the legions there against a barbarian incursion. His great success and popularity caused the emperor, Constantius II, to become justly concerned. Julian was, in fact, proclaimed emperor by the legions under his command in AD 360. The only thing that averted a war between the two was the death of Constantius in 361. Julian seems to have been a well intentioned ruler, and launched some serious political and bureaucratic reforms—including an attempt to revive pagan worship. His efforts were to little avail, however, as he died in 363 from wounds received during a campaign against the Persians.

Julian II AD 360-363, AE 1

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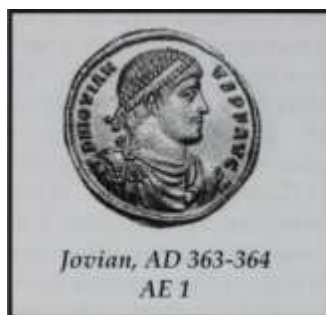
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Jovian



Jovian was born at Singidunum

(modern Belgrade) to a former Roman tribune and comes domesticorum. He himself rose to the rank of protector domesHCUS, guard of the imperial household, under Constantius II and under Julian. He served with Julian during the campaign against Shapur in 363 and was proclaimed emperor the day after Julian's death. Anxious to retreat from the East, he concluded a treaty with the Persians that ceded lands in Mesopotamia, and established peace on terms less than desirable to the Romans.

Jovian began the trip back to Rome, and held funeral rites for Julian at Tarsus. He died shortly thereafter at Dadastana, on the border of Bithynia and Galatia. Some accounts claim that he ate poisoned mushrooms, others that he died of suffocation from a charcoal brazier. He was apparently disposed to over eating and drinking. It is uncertain whether he died accidentally or was murdered.

Jovian had a son named Varronianus (named after his paternal grandfather) who served with him as Consul in 364, but apparently was never elevated to the rank of Caesar. At Nicaea, a high ranking officer by the name of Valentinian was named to succeed Jovian.

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Condensed Genealogy

Varronianus

Flavius Jovianus

Valentinian I / Valens

■?(*#£%,



Valentinian I, AD 364-375 AR miliarensis (xl.5)

Flavius Valentinianus was a native of Pannonia who served in the military campaigns of Gaul and Persia under

Julian II. He remained loyal to Julian's successor, Jovian, and was proclaimed emperor himself when the latter died accidentally in 364.

Upon assuming the purple, Valentinian elevated his younger brother, Valens, as co-emperor and placed him in charge of the Eastern half of the empire. Valentinian then ruled the Western half from his own residence at Treveri.

The joint reign was plagued with barbarian incursions on virtually all of the borders, and most of their energy was consumed in defense of the provinces. Valentinian came to an inglorious end, apparently succumbing to an apoplectic fit of rage over the disrespect of a barbarian deputation to his court in 375. Valens was slain by Visigoths in a disastrous rout of the Roman army near Hadrianopolis in 378.

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Procopius



Procopius, AD 365-366 AV solidus (xl.25)

Procopius was born about 326 and grew up in Cilicia, but his background

is obscure. He was seemingly related in some way to Julian II, perhaps through his mother. There was also a former governor of Cilicia named Procopius from whom he could have been descended. He served in the Persian campaigns of Constantius II. He also commanded a legion under Julian during that emperor's Persian campaign. He returned with Jovian to Tarsus—apparently not far from his home—for Julian's funeral. Procopius then retired to private life and supported Jovian's accession. When Valentinian was named to succeed Jovian, Procopius went to Constantinople and raised an army in rebellion. A series of battles in Asia Minor led ultimately to his defeat at the hands of Valens, and to his execution on May 27, 366. The manner of his dispatch is variously reported by ancient historians, but Sozomenus and Theophanes agree that Valens had Procopius tied to two bent trees that when released tore him apart.

The coinage of Procopius ranges from gold solidi to small bronzes. They are all scarce to rare, and only the gold is struck with any degree of quality or consistency. The later Roman emperor, Anthemius (AD 467-472), is said to have been a descendent of Procopius.

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1932, pp. 143-148.

Condensed Genealogy

Julius Julianus ?

Procopius

Gratian



Gratian, AD 367-383 AR liglit miliarensis (x 1.5)

Flavius Gratianus was the son of Valentinian I and his first wife; Severa. He was raised to the purple in 367 at the age of eight and ruled jointly with his father until the latter's death in 375. Still only a teenager, Gratian ascended the throne as joint ruler with his half-brother Valentinian II and his uncle Valens. Gratian ruled the West, Valens the East and Valentinian II, who was only four years old, was Augustus only nominally. Gratian was a devout Christian and did much to move the state government away from paganism. Three years later, when his uncle was killed at Hadrianopolis, he and his brother were left with the entire empire. This was not a viable arrangement, as the young Valentinian (now only seven) was not capable of ruling the West and Gratian could not manage both East and West. Gratian therefore elevated the outstanding general Theodosius as Augustus in the East, which left him free to rule from Trier, and help Valentinian with problems in the West.

One of those problems was the rebellion of Magnus Maximus. Marching into Paris to suppress the rebellion in 383, Gratian was surprised by a mutiny. He fled, but was overtaken and killed.

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Condensed Genealogy

Gratianus Funarius

I

Valentinian I

I

Valeria Marina Severa

I

1^

Flavius Gratianus

Valentinian II



Valentinian II, AD 375-392 AE2(x1.5)

Valentinian II was the son of Valentinian and his second wife, [ustina.

He was only four years old when elevated to the rank of Augustus on his father's death in 375. Initially, he ruled jointly with his older half-brother Gratian, and his uncle Valens, the brother of Valentinian I. On the death of Valens in 378, the general Theodosius was made Augustus by Gratian and the two brothers took charge of the West. Actually, the government of Italy, Africa and Illyricum, which was placed in the hands of Valentinian II, was administered by his mother Justina. Gaul, Britain and Spain were administered by Gratian.

Buoyed by the victory over Gratian, Maximus invaded Italy. Valentinian was forced to flee East and solicit help from Theodosius, whose army defeated Maximus in 388. Valentinian II was reinstalled in Italy, but fell increasingly under the control of the German general Arbogastes. On May 15, 392 he was either strangled or committed suicide, leaving the Western Empire vacant. It remained so for three months, until Arbogastes placed the puppet Eugenius on the throne.

Like the coins of Maximinus II and Galerius, those of Valentinian I and Valentinian II can easily be confused. The Inscriptions of certain types are identical for the two rulers. Sometimes one can attribute the coin by reverse type, but more often the portrait style must be used as a gauge. Portraits of Valentinian II are typically much younger and slimmer than those of his

father.

Select Bibliography

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Theodosius I

Ravius rheodosius was the son of Count rheodosius who pacified Brit-din during the reign of Valentinian I.

Like his father, Theodosius was an extraordinary general ,md was raised to the rank of Augustus in 379 by Gratian. He was married to Aelia Flacilla, who bore him two sons, Arcadius and Honorius. She died in 386. Theodosius was given responsibility for the Eastern provinces, and had no sooner quieted the threatening Goths than he found Gratian and Valentinian II succumbing to the advance of Magnus Maximus.

Theodosius marched West and defeated Maximus, regaining control of the Western provinces for Valentinian II. When the latter died in 392 Euge-nius usurped the throne, requiring Theodosius to march West again. This time, he restored the entire kingdom to his sole rule. Even though his son Arcadius was associated with him, the child was powerless. Unfortunately, Theodosius lived only a short time longer and died of dropsy at Milan in 395. His sons, Arcadius and Honorius divided the empire—East and West— between them.



Aelia Flacilla. AE 2 (xl.25) wife of Theodosius I

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Theodosius

I

Flavius Theodosius

Thermantia

I

Magnus Maximus / Flavius Victor



Magnus Maximus

AD 383-388 AVsolidus (x1.5)

Magnus Maximus was born in Spain, and like many rulers of his day rose through military service to a position of power. He served as Magister Militum per Gallias (chief military magistrate in Gaul) under Theodosius I. He was later appointed commander of the Roman army in Britain under Gratian, but rebelled and was elevated to the throne by those legions in 383. He marched into Gaul and overran Gratian. Not content with one-third of the empire, Maximus invaded Italy in 387 but was met and defeated by his former mentor Theodosius I. He was captured and executed at Aquileia. Magnus Maximus was the last really powerful general in the west and his death marked the beginning of a new age of domination by Constantinople. His rebellion is also notable for the extensive use of barbarian mercenaries—a growing trend that became a crisis. Flavius Victor was the son of Magnus Maximus and was named co-emperor during the final year of his father's reign. He was captured in Gaul after the execution of his father and was also killed.



Flavius Victor, AD 387-388 AR siliqua (x2)

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Theodosius ?

Flavius Clemens Magnus Maximus

I

Flavius Victor

Eugenius



Eugenius, AD 392-394 AR siliqua (x1.5)

Flavins Eugenius was a high ranking civil official in Rome; holding the title "Master of Offices". He was descended from a prestigious family, and prior to his bureaucratic appointment was a teacher of Latin grammar. He was, according to historians, a man of high moral character, but not a man of great courage or strength.

When Valentinian II died in 392 the Western throne remained vacant, until three months later when the German general Arbogastes installed Eugenius on

the throne as a puppet ruler. This appointment was not acknowledged by Theodosius, the emperor in Constantinople. In 394, Theodosius marched west with an army and defeated the forces supporting Eugenius at the Battle of Frigidus. Eugenius was put to death and Arbogastes committed suicide.

Even though Eugenius had not been recognized in the East, he struck coins commemorating a fictitious joint consulship with Theodosius. He also used a little slight of hand in announcing vows of the fifth year, when he was killed in his second year of usurpation. His coins are all scarce to rare, and especially so in gold. The silver siliqua seems to be the denomination most easily obtained by collectors. Although depicted with a full beard, Eugenius was known to be a Christian.

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Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Eugenius

Arcadius (East)



Arcadius, AD 383-408 AV solidus (x1.25)

In 395, with the death of Theodosius I, the empire was divided between his two young sons, Arcadius (18?) and Honorius (10), as rulers of East and West respectively. This division lasted technically until Romulus Augustus sent the crown of the West to Constantinople in 476, but practically it survived even longer.

Arcadius was a weak individual not at all like his father, and relied on his court, his wife, and his Praetorian Praefect to manage affairs of state. He married Aelia Eudoxia, daughter of the Frank, Bauto, in 395. She was a strong and capable administrator and for all practical purposes ruled the Eastern

empire until her death in 404. They had a son named Theodosius II, who was elevated to the rank of co-emperor in 402. It was fortunate for Arcadius, and for the empire, that this was a period of relative peace—at least in the East.

In the final days of Arcadius' reign, the Praefect Anthemius fulfilled the responsibilities of state for him. Although he was only 31 years old, the feeble emperor apparently died peacefully of natural causes in his palace at Constantinople on May 1, 408.



Eudoxia, AV solidus wife of Arcadius

Select Bibliography

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Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Theodosius I

Thermantia

1

Theodosius I

1

Flavius Arcadius

Aelia Flavia Flacilla

I

11oiiorius (West)



Honorius, AD 393-423 AVsolidus (xl.5)

The younger son of Theodosius I

was raised to the rank of co-emperor in 393 at the age of nine. When he was

awarded administration of the West, from the city of Ravenna, he was actually under the regency of Stilicho. Honorius later married Stilicho's daughter Maria (a second cousin— Stilicho married Serena, the first cousin of Honorius). As peaceful as things seemed in the East, they were chaotic in the West. During this period, the provinces of Britain, Gaul and Spain were under constant pressure from barbarian tribes and a parade of usurpers disrupted the Roman system of administration. Honorius was not, himself, a strong leader and it was left to Stilicho to hold the patchwork of empire together.

Unfortunately, in 408 he was accused as part of a palace intrigue and executed. This left Italy unprotected, and the Visigoths led by Alaric sacked Rome in 410. The successor of Alaric moved his tribe into Gaul in 412, and Honorius was able to consolidate somewhat. A new military leader of great ability surfaced during this time. Constantius III became Honorius' most capable and trusted general, and regained much of Spain and Gaul for the Romans. He was elevated to the rank of Augustus by Honorius in 421. Like his brother, Honorius died a feeble and sickly ruler at his capital.

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Constantine III / Constans (West)



Constantine III, AD 407-411 AVsolidus (x1.5)

Constantine III was the most successful of the ephemeral rulers put up

by the Roman army in Britain to challenge the inept reign of Honorius and Arcadius. Although a career soldier without political experience, he gained control of Gaul and parts of Spain, actually posing a threat to the empire of the West. In an attempt to placate the usurper and check his advances, Constantine was accepted by Honorius as co-emperor. Arcadius, who ruled the Eastern empire, refused to accord him that honor. He was eventually met in battle and defeated by Constantius III, the able general of Honorius.

Cohen has illustrated a coin of Constans II, the son of Constantine III who was raised to the rank of Caesar in 408, and Augustus in 410. There are only two known specimens of this issue. One is in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (the specimen illustrated in Cohen), the other appeared in French sale catalogues of the early 20th century and its whereabouts is unknown. A third specimen, illustrated in Lafaurie has been condemned.



Constans II, AD 410-11 AR silique

Select Bibliography

Demougeot, E. "Constantin III, l'empereur d'Arles", Hommage à André

Dupont, Montpellier, 1974, pp. 83-125. Lafaurie, J. "La chronologie des monnaies de Constantin III et de

Constant II", *Revue Numismatique*, 6/16, 1953, pp. 37-65.

Condensed Genealogy

??

I, I

Flavius Claudius Constantinus (III)

I

Constans

Maximus / Priscus Attalus (West)



Maximus, AD 409-411 ARsiliqua (x2)

By this time, the state of government in the West had become so confused that usurpers were toppling usurpers. The legions in Spain did not support Constantine III, who had been acclaimed by the legions in Gaul and Britain, and they raised their own emperor. The rebellious general Gerontius raised an obscure Roman (or possibly his own son—see Jones & Martindale, *Prosopography*) by the name of Maximus to the throne in 409. He was toppled by Constantius III.

Alaric emerged as leader of the Visigoths, and demanded huge extortions from Rome. He also forced on the empire his puppet Priscus Attalus. Under the reign of Attalus, the city of Rome was sacked for the first time since the fall of the monarchy (some 800 years earlier). Attalus and Galla Placidia, the half-sister of Honorius, were abducted during the sack. Placidia, while in captivity, was married to Alaric's successor Ataulf in 414 and had a child. Attalus was reinstalled by Ataulf at Rome that same year, in defiance of Constantius III's move into Gaul. The Visigoth chieftain, finding no further use for him, deposed Attalus in 415. He was turned over to Honorius, who banished him to the island of Lipara.



Priscus Attalus

AD 409-410 & 414-415

AV solidus (x1.5)

Select Bibliography

King, C.E. "Fifth century silver coinage in the Western Roman empire (401-413)", *Melanges de Numismatique offerts a Pierre Bastien*, Wetteren, 1987, pp. 285-295.

Jovinus / Sebastianus (West)



Jovinus AD 411-413 AVsolidus (x1.5)

The Burgundian and Alan tribes of Gaul tried to Legitimize their conquests

by installing the Roman noble Jovinus as emperor. He set up court at Mainz and elevated his brother, Sebastianus, to the rank of Augustus in 412.

Guntarius, and Goar, the same

tribal kings who installed Jovinus, negotiated a peace with Honorius' general Constantius III in 413. Jovinus (presumably along with his brother) fled to the Visigothic court seeking sanctuary. Ataulf, in an attempt to gain the favor of Honorius, returned Jovinus for execution. In another account, he was defeated by Ataulf and executed by the Visigoth. In either case, the reign of Jovinus was brief and inconsequential—except that coins were struck in his name and perhaps in the name of his brother Sebastianus.

The coins of Jovinus are very rare in gold, less so in silver. They were issued at the mints of Trier, Lugdunum and Arles. All of the coins attributed to Sebastianus are presently considered false or suspect (see King, below).

Select Bibliography

King, C.E. "Fifth Century Roman Coinage in the Western Roman Empire: The Usurpations in Spain and Gaul", *Melanges de numismatique offerts a*

Pierre Bastien a l'occasion de son 75e anniversaire, Wetteren, 1987, (Sebastianus, p. 368).

Condensed Genealogy

^t; —

Flavius Jovinus

Sebastianus

Constantius III (West)



Constantino III AD 421 AY aureus (x1.5)



Galla Placidia, d. AD 450

AV solidns

wife of Constantius III

Constantius was appointed Master

Of Soldiers by I [onorillS ^nd consolidated power in the West quickly. I [e married Galla Placidia, the half-sister of Arcadiusand Honorius, in 417. She had been abducted by AJaric in the sack

of Rome (410) and was traded back to the Romans for a huge ransom. By 421, Constantius was acknowledged by Honorius as co-emperor, but the Eastern court refused to accept his elevation. The specter of confrontation was averted by his unexpected death in the Fall of 421, after a very brief reign.

His infant son, Valentinian III, inherited the throne at the age of two but was temporarily displaced by the usurper Johannes. Valentinian was eventually married to the daughter of Theodosius II, restoring the bond between East and West. The empress Galla Placidia became Regent for the first 12 years of her young son's reign and controlled the government of the West.

Select Bibliography

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X'agl, Maria Assunta. Galla Placidia, (Studien zur Geschichte und des

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Louvain, 1961.

Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Constantius (III)

Johannes (West)



Johannes, AD 423-425 AVsolidus (x1.5)

Johannes was a man of humble origin, born about 380. He rose through civil service to a position as *primicerius notariorum* (chief secretary) to

Honorius. Following the death of Honorius in 423, the Western court refused to accept the six-year-old Valentinian III as the legitimate heir. In opposition, the usurper Johannes was placed on the throne by the *magister militum* Castinus and a rising young officer by the name of Aetius. Johannes was unable, however, to assert any real authority.

A large army was sent from the East by Theodosius II to enforce the claim of Valentinian. After a brief reign at Ravenna, Johannes was arrested by Galla Placidia, the mother-regent of Valentinian (and sister of Honorius) and condemned to death in the summer of 425. According to ancient historians, he

was taken to Aquileia where he was publicly mutilated and exhibited in the Circus before being killed.

The main mint of Johannes was Ravenna, and his coinage is very similar in design and fabric to that of his predecessor, Honorius. All of his issues are rare. Coins from other mints are very rare, but specimens from Rome, Milan, Aries and Trier have been noted.

Select Bibliography

Ulrich-Bansa. "La monetazione di Giovanni (423-425 A.D.), Quaderni ticinesi, vol. 5, pp. 277-290, 1976.

Condensed Genealogy

Johannes

Theodosius II (East)



Theodosius II, AD 402-450 AR miliarensis (x1.5)

Theodosius II was the son of Arcadius and was named co-emperor in

402. He had no talent as a leader or administrator, and the responsibility of rule passed to his strong-willed and ambitious wife Eudocia and his sister Pulcheria. Together, these remarkable women managed the affairs of state during the incredibly long reign of Theodosius. Pulcheria assumed the regency in 414, when she was only 15 years old. Eudocia became the wife of Theodosius in 421 and became involved in state affairs immediately.

The Eastern empire enjoyed relative peace during this period. One of the main accomplishments was the compilation of the famous Codex Theodosianus, which became the basis for much of Western law. In the later years of his reign, the empire was ravaged by the attacks of Attila the Hun and several treaties with terms unfavorable to the Romans were negotiated. Theodosius died in 450 from injuries sustained in a hunting accident.



Eudocia, AV solidus wife of Theodosius II

Select Bibliography

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' Century", ANS Museum Notes 6, 1954, pp. 131-142. De Salis, J.W.F. "The Coins of the Two Eudoxias, Eudocia, Placidia,

and Honoria, and of Theodosius II, Marcian and Leo I, struck in

Italy, Numismatic Chronicle, 1867, pp. 203-15. Pharr, C. The Theodosian Code, (law) Princeton, 1952.

Condensed Genealogy

Theodosius I

I

Aelia Flavia Flacilla

I

1^

Arcadius

Flavius Bauto

I

Eudoxia

1^

Flavius Theodosius (II)

Valentinian III (West)

Valentinian was born in 411 c), a descendant of the Theodosian line on his

mother's side. Following the death of his father, Constantius III, Galla Placidia took her son to Constantinople for protection. After the Eastern tones deposed Johannes in 425, he was named emperor of the West under the regency of his mother. Valentinian was married to Licinia Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius II, when she was only 15—he was eighteen. The two had been betrothed since infancy. Due to the length of his reign, the coins of Valentinian III are relatively common for the period, though scarce enough in absolute terms.



Valentinian III, AD 425-455 AVsolidus (xl.5)



Justa Grata Honoria, AV solidus sister of Valentinian III



Licinia Eudoxia, AV solidus Wife of Valentinian HI

Select Bibliography

Bury, J.B. "Justa Grata Honoria", *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1919, pp. 1-13.
Depeyrot, Georges. "Les solidi gaulois de Valentinien HI", (imitative of

Valentinian IE) *Swiss Numismatic Review*, 65,1986, pp. 111-131. Lacam, Guy. "Des siliques inconnues de Valentinien EH, *Revista Italiana di*

Numismatica e Scienze Affini, Milan, 92,1990 pp. 157-169 . *La Fin de Yempire Romain et le Monnayage Or en Italie, 455 A93*, Vol. I,

Lucerne, 1983, (Valentinian Kt, pp. 27-58).

Marcian (East)



Mercian, AD 450-457 A\ 1.5solidi(x1.25)



Pulcheria, AV solidus (x1.5)

sister o/Theodosius II

wife of Marcian

Flavius Valerius Marcianus was an Dlyrian soldier who rose to prominence with the aid of me German general As-

par. He became a Senator, and attracted the attention of Pulcheria, the sister of Theodosius II. Pulcheria had served as regent for her brother after the death of their father Arcadius. Even after attaining his majority, Theodosius deferred to her. When he died in 450, Pulcheria was allowed to choose his successor. She married Marcian in a political arrangement and elevated him to the rank of Augustus.

Marcian was an effective and popular ruler, and managed the Eastern empire well. He hosted the Fourth Ecumenical Council of the Church at Chalcedon in 451, in an attempt to unify feuding Christian theologians from all parts of the empire.

Marcian died peacefully at Constantinople in 467 at the age of 67.

Select Bibliography

Holum, K.G. "Pulcheria's Crusade of AD 421-22 and the Ideology of Imperial Victory", Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies, 18, 1977, pp. 153-72.

. Theodosian Empresses, Berkeley, 1982.

Lacam, Guy. *La Fin de l'empire Romain et le Monnayage Or en Italie*, 455-493, Vol. I, Lucerne, 1983, (Marcian, pp. 115-151).

Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Valerius Marcianus

Petronius Maximus (West)



Petronius Maximus, AD 455 AVsolidus(x1.5)

Petronius Maximus was a wealthy and aristocratic senator with a public career of distinction. Twice, he had served as Consul. He was overly ambitious, and convinced Valentinian III to have the magister militum, Aetius, executed on grounds of conspiracy. Actually, it was Maximus who was conspiring to obtain Aetius' position. Within six months, friends of Aetius took their revenge on Valentinian, by murdering him in the Campus Martius. Valentinian was the last of the Theodosian line, and died without an heir. Using his wealth to buy influence, Maximus was elected emperor the following day. Eudoxia survived her husband and was forced to marry the duplicitous Maximus as a means of strengthening his position. Appalled by that union, she called upon the Vandal, Gaiseric, for assistance. Her request was answered by the barbarian's sack of Rome and the abduction of herself and her two daughters. As the Vandals approached the city, Maximus attempted to flee but was killed by an angry crowd.

Select Bibliography

Hodgkin, T. *Italy and Her Invaders*, Vol 2, NY, 1980, (Petronius Maximus, pp. 221-229).

Kent, John. "Style and Mint in the Gold Coinage of the Western Roman Empire, 455-461.", *Essays in Honour of Robert Carson and Kenneth Jenkins*, London, 1993, pp. 267-275.

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Condensed Genealogy

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I, I

1

Flavius Anicius Petronius Maximus

Avitus (West)



Avitus, AD 455-456 AVsolidus (x1.5)

Following the death of Petronius Maximus, the throne remained vacant and Rome was without an emperor. At the urging of the Visigothic king, Avitus claimed the purple, but was unpopular with the people of Rome. He was deposed by Ricimer after a reign of fifteen months, once again leaving the position vacant—this time for nearly six months—until Majorian was elevated to the throne.

Majorian (West)



Majorian, AD 457-461 AV solidus (x1.5)

Majorian was proclaimed Augustus at Ravenna in 457, with tacit acknowledgment by the emperor Leo in Constantinople. He secured parts of the Western empire by marching into Gaul and defeating the Visigoths near Aries. Following a failed campaign against the Vandals, he returned to Italy where he was deposed and executed by Ricimer. The coinage of Majorian is rare.

Select Bibliography

Grierson R and M. Mays. Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection, Washington, 1992, (Avitus, pp. 248-9; Majorian, pp. 250-252).

Lacam, Guy. La Fin de l'empire Romain et le Monnayage Or en Italie, 455-493, Vol. I, Lucerne, 1983, (Avitus, pp. 155-220, Majorian, pp. 223-313).

Nathansen, Ralph. "Avitus, Italy and the East in A.D. 455-456", Byzantion, 51, 1981, 232-247.

Condensed Genealogy

Agricola

I

Marcus Maecilius Flavius Eparchius Avitus

I Flavius Julius Valerianus Majorianus

Leo I (East)



Aelia Verina, AV solidus Wife of Leo I

Leo I was a Thracian who rose through the military to a position of power. On Marcian's death, he became

emperor through the support of the magister militum Aspar. He replaced

many of the Germanic mercenaries

with Isaurians, including one named Tarasis (renamed Zeno) whom he promoted and honored with his daughter Ariadne's hand in marriage. In 467, he appointed Anthemius as Augustus in Italy and the two led a major expedition against the Vandals in the following year. The effort failed, and Anthemius was overthrown on his return to Italy. Leo abandoned further military adventures.

The only son of Leo and Verina died as an infant, and the emperor was left without a successor. Zeno was not considered a popular choice because of his origin, so the child of Zeno and Ariadne was given the rank of Caesar. Leo II was elevated to Augustus only days before his grandfather's death.

Select Bibliography

Adelson, H.L. and G.L. Kustas. "A Bronze Hoard of the Period of

Leo I", ANS Museum Notes 9,1960, pp. 139-188. Kollgaard, Ron. "The fall of Rome and the early Byzantine empire" (Leo I - Anastasius), *The Celator*, 4 parts, Dec. 1992; Jan. 1993; Feb. 1993; Mar. 1993.

Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Valerius Leo

Virtually nothing is known of Libius Severus, except that he was installed as emperor by Ricimer at Ravenna in 461. He seems to have come from Lucania, in southern Italy, and was no more than a figurehead. He had no base of support other than the indulgence of the *magister militum*. It is possible, according to Grierson and Mays, that he was accepted in the East—as contemporary coins in the name of Leo from Italian mints seem to suggest. Even the details of his death are obscure, except for the date. Although the coin inscriptions read Libius Severus, this ruler is often referred to by numismatists as Severus III. His coins are scarce, but obtainable since they were struck in all three metals. The small bronzes bear portraits which are neither recognizable nor accompanied by legible inscriptions, but reverse monograms on these coins are often clear. Some of his silver coins bear letters suggesting a reference to Ricimer.

Select Bibliography

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Lacam, Guy. *Le monnayage de Ricimer*, Paris, 1987.

. *L'Agonie de Rome. Le Maître de l'Occident: un barbare Flavius*

Ricimerus, 455-472, Paris 1988.

Oost, Stewart I. "D,N, Libius Severus PF. Aug", *Classical Philology* 65, 1970, pp. 228-240.

Ulrich-Bansa, O. *Moneta Mediolanensis* (352-498), Venice, 1949, (Libius Severus, pp. 270-275).

Condensed Genealogy

Libius Severus

153

Anthemius (West)



Anthemius, AD 467-472 AVsolidus (xl.5)

Procopius Anthemius, a distinguished nobleman and general from Constantinople was raised by Leo I to the position of Emperor of the West.

His accession ended the imperial vacancy in Rome during which Ricimer, the magister militum, maintained control of the city. Anthemius was married to Aelia Marcia Euphemia, the only daughter of the emperor Marcian. Alypia, the daughter of Anthemius and Euphemia was married to Ricimer in an attempt to consolidate power in the Western Empire. This failed, however, and in AD 472 Ricimer laid siege to Rome—capturing the city and installing Olybrius as emperor. Anthemius, disguised as a beggar, attempted to flee but was recognized and immediately executed.

The coinage of Anthemius is fairly rare, although the regular appearance of gold solidi in the marketplace, suggesting a new find, has made his coinage more readily obtainable. That of his wife is extremely rare.



Euphemia, AV solidus (xl.5) Wife of Anthemius

Select Bibliography

Poydenot, H. "Medaille d'argent d'Euphemia, femme d'Anthemius", *Revue Numismatique*, 2/10, 1865, pp. 231-4.

Grierson P. and M. Mays. *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, Washington, 1992, (Anthemius, pp. 255-259).

Lacam, Guy. *La Fin de l'Empire Romain et le Monnayage Or en Italie, 455-493*, Vol. I, Lucerne, 1983, (Anthemius, pp. 399-425).

Condensed Genealogy

Procopius

Procopius Anthemius

Olybrius / Glycerius (West)



Olybrius, AD 472 AY tremissis (x2)



Glycerius, AD 473-474 AY tremissis (x2)

Olybrius, a member of the prestigious Anicii family, served a term as Consul in Constantinople. He was married to a daughter of Valentinian III. He was installed as emperor of the West by Ricimer, replacing Anthemius, but ruled for only a few months before dying of dropsy.

Glycerius was a public servant, with the rank of comes domesticorum, under Olybrius. Following an interregnum of several months after the death of Olybrius, he was advanced to the throne by Gundobad, the nephew of Ricimer, who had inherited the position of magister militum on his uncle's death. Leo, the emperor of the East refused to acknowledge Glycerius and sent Julius Nepos to displace him. In 474, Glycerius was deposed, but was

allowed to enter the clergy as Bishop of Salona and live out the rest of his days in that role. The coins of both Olybrius and Glycerius are rare.

Select Bibliography

Bun; J.B. "Note on the emperor Olybrius", *English Historical Review* 1, pp. 507-9. Grierson P. and M. Mays. *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton*

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(Olybrius, p. 262; Glycerius, p. 263). Hodgkin T. *Italy and Her Invaders*, Vol 2, NY, 1980, (Glycerius, pp. 489-494).

Condensed Genealogy

Anicius Olybrius

Flavius Glycerius

Julius Nepos (West)



Julius Nepos, AD 474-475 AV solidus (x1.5)

Julius Nepos rose to power in Italy, on the eastern coast of the Adriatic. There is no indication that he was related to the Nepotian of a century earlier, even though his father's name was apparently Nepotian. Nepos was married to a relative of Verina, the wife of Leo I. He was sent to Italy in 474 by Leo with orders to depose Glycerius, and on completing that task assumed the purple himself. It is not clear whether he had been promised the throne by Leo, because the emperor of the East died before he could acknowledge Nepos. The new emperor, Zeno, did not immediately support his accession.

In August of 475, Nepos was attacked by Orestes, the magister militum, but escaped from Ravenna and ironically fled to Salona, in Dalmatia. The previous emperor, Glycerius, was already residing at Salona as Bishop. Nepos lived there until his death in 480 at the hands of a resentful follower. During this period in exile, he was acknowledged by Odoacer (the successor to

Orestes) on coins struck in Italy. A few rare so-lidi from the Constantinople mint bear witness to his acceptance by Zeno—even if only lukewarm. Like virtually all of the coins of this period, those of Julius Nepos are either very scarce or rare.

Select Bibliography

Grierson P. and M. Mays. *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, Washington, 1992, (Julius Nepos, pp. 266-268).

Condensed Genealogy

Nepotianus

Flavius Julius Nepos

Romulus Augustus (West)



Romulus Augustus

AY trcmisiss (V2)

AD 475-476

Romulus Augustus was the son of

Orestes, the magister militum under Julius Nepos. He came to power in 475 as the result of a revolt by his father. The young boy did not rule in any way other than name and was deposed the next year by Odovacar, who had been named king by revolting barbarian mercenaries. His father was captured at Pavia and executed, but the child was spared and allowed to retire to private life in Campania with a sizable pension. He lived at least until 507. Grierson points out that the reputation of Romulus Augustus as the last Roman emperor of the West is misleading. Julius Nepos, his predecessor, had not been deposed, only dislocated. Grierson argues that he was technically the legitimate emperor until 480, since Romulus had not been recognized in the East. After the overthrow, Odovacar returned the imperial insignia worn by Romulus to Zeno in Constantinople. Although Zeno had not actively supported Nepos earlier, he made it clear to Odovacar that Nepos was still the

legitimate ruler of the West. It was, at this point, of little consequence anyway because most of Italy and the West had been overrun by barbarian tribes who set up minor kingdoms throughout the land.

Select Bibliography

Grierson P. and M. Mays. Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection, Washington, 1992, (Romulus Augustus, pp. 269-70).

Condensed Genealogy

Orestes

Romulus Augustus

Romula Augusta ? I

Leo II / Zeno (East)



Leo II, AD 474 AVsolidus (x1.5)



Zeno, AD 474-491 AVsolidus (x1.5)



Ariadne, AV tremissis (x1.5)

daughter of Leo I and Verina

wife of Zeno

Leo II, born in 467, was the grandson of Leo I. He inherited the throne at the age of six, and was initially sole ruler, but within a matter of days elevated his father Zeno as co-emperor. The boy died about nine months later leaving his father sole ruler. Zeno was an Isaurian chieftain, originally named Tarasis. He was unpopular with the aristocracy because of his heritage, and faced several revolts, as well as incursions on the borders. In 475 he was driven from Constantinople by the usurper Basiliscus, with the support of the former empress Verina. Zeno soon crushed the rebellion, and returned to power in 476—apparently elevating another Leo, the son of his ally Armatus, as Caesar. Shortly thereafter, Armatus was murdered and Leo was ordained into the priesthood. Zeno died of epilepsy in 491 without an heir.

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Hahn, W. "DieMunzprägungfür AeliaAriadne", *BYZANTIOZ Festschrift für Herbert Hunger zum 70 Geburtstag*, Vienna, 1984, pp. 104-6.

Condensed Genealogy

Kodisas

I Zeno (Tarasis)

I

Leo I

I Aelia Ariadne

I

Leo (II)

Basiliscus (East)



Basiliscus, AD 475-476 AVsolidus (xl.5)



Aelia Zenonis

AVsolidus (xl.5)

wife of Basiliscus

Basiliscus was the brother of Aelia Verina, the wife of Leo I. He served as commander of the Roman fleet and following a disastrous expedition against the Vandals in 468 retired to private life. In 475, he and Verina conspired to remove her son-in-law Zeno, who managed to escape from Constantinople. Basiliscus was proclaimed emperor, and soon thereafter elevated his son Marcus to joint rule (no portraits).

Kent has suggested that a rare *solidus* in the names of Zeno and Leo (Sear 4406) refers to two younger sons of Basiliscus by those names. Grierson and May argue, in support of Marchant and Hahn, that the coin actually belongs to Zeno and the son of Armatus (Grierson pp. 181-182).

In addition to the gold portrait coins of Zenonis, tiny bronzes with her portrait and monogram were also struck. Basiliscus was deposed in 476 and sent, along with his wife and son Marcus, to Cappadocia where the three were executed.

Select Bibliography

Grierson P. and M. Mays. *Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, Washington, 1992, (Basiliscus, pp. 177-80).

Kent, J.P.C. "Zeno and Leo, the Most Noble Caesars", *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1959, pp. 93-98.

Condensed Genealogy

Flavius Basiliscus

Leontius (East)



Leontius, AD 484-488 AV solidus (x1.5)

The general Leontius was sent by Zeno to Isauria in 484 to suppress the rebellion of Illus—one of several uprisings during Zeno's unpopular reign. Instead of displacing Illus, Leontius joined the rebellion and had himself proclaimed emperor. He was crowned at Tarsus by the former empress VerilUL The wife of Leo I had been held by Illus for five years, and was part of an earlier attempt to overthrow Zeno. The combined forces of Leontius and Illus immediately took the city of Antioch, but soon met resistance from forces loyal to Zeno. Unable to hold the city, they retreated to Isauria where Leontius and Illus were besieged for four years. They were finally captured by Ostrogothic mercenaries and executed.

The coins of Leontius are extremely rare. The only certain coins are solidi, but two controversial bronzes in the Ashmolean Museum are possibly issues of his (see Walker, below). No coins are known of Illus. The specimen illustrated above was found in Scandinavia (see Fagerlie, below) and is thought to have made its way there through Italy. Another ruler of the early Romaion (Byzantine) period bore this name and struck gold solidi as well, but the two are easily distinguished by style.

Select Bibliography

Fagerlie, J.M. Late Roman and Byzantine Solidi Found in Sweden and Denmark, ANS NNM 157,1967, (Leontius, page 62, No. 629).

Grierson P. and M. Mays. Catalogue of Late Roman Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection, Washington, 1992, (Leontius, p. 190).

Walker, D.R. "A Copper Coinage for Leontius I", Numismatic Circular 75, 1967, pp. 264-5.

Condensed Genealogy

Leontia Paulina

Leontius

Anastasius (East)

When Zeno died without a heir on April 9, 491, the choice of a successor was left to his widow Ariadne. She chose from within the palace stall a silitary (marshal) by the name of Anastasius. He was not of royal blood, but was well respected by all but the clergy. His Monophysite views (even though renounced) caused suspicion on the part of the Patriarch, and were a problem throughout his reign. His position was strengthened greatly when he and Ariadne were married shortly thereafter. Anastasius was an effective administrator, and during his long reign accumulated some 320,000 pounds of gold in the treasury.

The coinage at the beginning of his reign was of a style and fabric typical for the period. By 498, however, he had instituted a sweeping reform of the financial system and brought back large bronze coins for circulation in domestic commerce. This series was issued in denomination marked by Greek letters, which provides a convenient point for numismatists to terminate the Roman series and start that of the Romano-Byzantines.

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Condensed Genealogy

Anastasius

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Roman Iconography

The imagery on coins struck at Roman mints was in every sense a reflection of the culture and artistic preference of the people that it served.

From our perspective, it may seem that the engravers lost their skills in the latter half of the third century, and never regained them. This was certainly not the case, and there are many special issues from this time which reveal great drafting ability. It was important that coins projected a message, visually and epigraphically, that the general populace could understand and accept. Still, the use of allegory and the subtlety of design did not vanish. The use of images was so important to the Roman people that even during times of crisis they held on to the abstractions of their culture.

Modern numismatic literature tends to focus more on historical and technical aspects of coinage than on the art historical aspects—especially in the Roman field. This is not to say that we lack dissertations on numismatic iconography and typology (see Gneecchi-Elmer and Sutherland, below), but the imagery on coins is still a relatively understudied field. It is a field that is so vast, and so complex, that an army of scholars would be challenged to unlock all of its mysteries. For those who wish to delve into this treasure chest, it is generally productive to examine the art of parallel media. Art is never created in a vacuum, and comparative analysis is a good place for the explorer to begin.

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Mythology

Much of the mythological tradition of the Romans was borrowed from the Greeks. In the second century, the Roman poet Ennius, born in southern Italy of Greek extraction, listed the twelve primary Roman deities and compared them to the twelve Olympian gods of the Greeks.

His list, in the order related included:

ROMAN GREEK ASSOCIATION

Juno Hera Matron

Vesta Hestia I [earth

Minerva Athena Wisdom/War

Ceres Demeter Earth/Harvest

Diana Artemis Hunt

Venus Aphrodite Love

Mars Ares War

Mercury Hermes Trade

Jove (Jupiter) Zeus Sky/Rule

Neptune Poseidon Sea

Vulcan Hephaestus Fire/Smith

Apollo Apollo Light/Arts

Many of these deities took on new roles and were acknowledged as having broader powers under the Romans, but their basic functions and attributes were essentially the same as in Greek mythology (see Volumes I and II). There were some uniquely Roman gods. Janus was the god of beginnings (from whence comes January). Genius was like a guardian angel or a

manifestation of character. Faunus assured the fruit-fulness of fields and animals, and Roma was the patroness of the city.

The deities and mythological figures depicted on Roman coins were typically accompanied by standard attributes which are relatively easy to recognize. Roman gods and personifications were closely linked to social functions and rituals—certainly more so than in Greek traditions, where god and man were often in conflict or competition. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between deities and personifications. A personification would not normally have been entreated by offerings or honored in a temple, but they often appear on coins. Typical personifications include honor, virtue, the many arts, mercy, justice, etc., etc. In Roman times these abstract notions were embodied mostly for the purpose of propaganda.

In addition to the Olympian gods which Ennius recorded, there were many lesser deities in the Roman pantheon. These deities were mainly created to guard some human interest, or provide some human need.

/ esser deities in the Roman pantheon

ROMAN

GREEK

ASSOCIATION

Aesculapius Asklepios \ lealing

Abundantia Euthenia Abundance

Bacchus Liber Wine

Concordia Homonoia Harmony

Cybele Kybele Mother goddess

Felicitas Eutycheia Happiness

Fortuna Tyche Destiny

Libertas Eleutheria Freedom

Nemesis Nemesis Avenging crime

Pax Eirene Peace

Proserpine Persephone Growing grain

Providentia Pronoia Providence

Salus Hygeia Health

Saturn Saturn Agriculture

Sol Helios The Sun

Spes Elpis Hope

Victoria Nike Victory

Luna Selene The Moon

In addition to the gods, Roman moneyers often honored a long list of heroes and demigods. Among these, one would include Aeneas, the Dioscuri, Hercules, and various deified or otherwise honored ancestors.

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Propaganda on Roman Coinage

Propaganda, by definition, is the propagation of any given doctrine, whether religious, political or philosophical. In our own Lifetimes we have seen many examples of the use of propaganda to advance the causes

of government. The Romans were certainly not tin- hist to promote political doctrine through the use of propaganda, but they may have been the best—perhaps of all time.

Money was invented, first and foremost, as a means to transfer wealth and

facilitate commerce. One of the pressing needs of most states was some manner in which to pay for the services of their own military or of mercenaries. Although Roman coinage came on the scene quite late in comparison to that of its neighboring Greek states, the reasons for developing a monetary system were essentially the same as those of their numismatic predecessors.

It did not take the Romans very long to realize that there was enormous potential in the images which could be placed on coinage. Coins typically circulated across a very broad spectrum of social classes and geographical regions. In addition, they were durable. People did not discard a coin just to be free of the image it bore. Consequently, the message delivered on a coin was echoed many times across the land. Lacking the communication that characterizes our age, it has been said that Roman coins served as the "newspapers" of their day. The narrative art that one finds in great profusion on these coins was very carefully designed to enhance the image of state and of its administrators.

During the Republican period, the imagery on coins was often of a personal nature. That is, a moneyer used this opportunity to bolster his family's reputation, herald its accomplishments, project its hopes, and more. Since moneyers changed frequently, the imagery and the message was constantly changing. Under the emperors of Rome, coins were issued regularly by a single authority, with a single purpose, and a very thoughtful iconographic program. The message was usually brief, but it was clear and powerful. Practically every Roman Imperial coin reverse has some propagandistic element in its design.

As we collect coins of the Roman period, we will find our own topics of interest, and they may not be related to the propagandistic element of the coin's design. Nevertheless, we should be aware of the great consequence that these images bore, and of the circumstances that caused them to be created. On the following pages are just a few of the many ways that coins were used to disseminate propaganda and to further the political ends of the rulers of Rome. For those who wish to delve deeper into the subject, we have included a brief bibliography at the end of this section.

Voting in Ancient Rome



L. Cassius Longinus, 60 BC

AR denarius (x1.5)

voting scene

The Greeks generally come to mind first when one thinks of democracy in the ancient world. But the Romans had a representative government as well—or at least the pretense of one. That they thought highly of this privilege is indicated by the depiction of voting scenes on coins. Under the Republic, voting was quite formal, and strict procedures were implemented to assure an honest and accurate result. See: L.R. Taylor, *Roman Voting Assemblies from the Hannibalic War to the Dictatorship of Caesar*, Ann Arbor, 1966.

According to a law enacted by the Roman Senate in 139 BC, voters used a carved wooden ballot to signify their choice for the *comitia centuriata*. There were several of these public assemblies (*comitia*) composed of elected officials. Another law, of 113 BC, set up a special commission presided over by L. Cassius Longinus Ravilla to try three Vestal Virgins accused of violating their vows. Fifty-three years later, a namesake descendant became moneyer and issued a coin depicting the famous trial vote (this moneyer, L. Cassius Longinus, was the younger brother of C. Cassius—one of the assassins of Julius Caesar). Another Republican denarius, issued by R. Licinius Nerva in 113/112 BC, depicts one citizen voting by placing his ballot in the *cista*, as another picks up his ballot from an official standing below the *pons* leading to the balloting place.

The voting of Senators in the Imperial Period had become somewhat perfunctory and inconsequential, but the vote of the military needed to be taken into account—even by the most powerful of rulers. Coin reverse types often extolled the hoped-for loyalty of the legions. Many an emperor perished at the hand of the imperial guard, and few Senators argued with the military's choice, by acclamation, of a successor.



P. Licinius Nerva, 113-112 BC

AR denarius (x1.5)

voting scene



Trajan as Imp er at or

(acclamation by the troops)

AE sestertius, AD 115



Commodus, AD 181

AR denarius (x1.5)

(Liberalitas holding

a counting board)

When conquering Roman generals returned home they were expected; by prece

dent and tradition, to make special distributions of the war booty that they had amassed. This was donv by distributing money in the form of coin. A

donative was given to soldiers of the army in recognition of their service, but a congiarium, was also distributed directly to the people. From the time of Hadrian on, they tend to be referred to as a "liberality" of the emperor (not necessarily the product of a specific victory). These distributions, through the emperor's largess, were made with special issues of coinage—complete with narrative scenes of the distribution. The propagandistic value of this imagery was immense. The distribution, of sometimes more than 100 denarii per citizen, was normally made in bronze or silver, but the narration appears on gold coins as well. The counting of coins was done with a flat tray containing holes. Depictions of the personification Liberalitas usually show her holding such a device.

The reverse of an aureus, struck for Antoninus Pius in AD 145, commemorates a liberality for the marriage of his daughter Faustina to Marcus Aurelius. The inscription reads simply LIB IIII or, the fourth liberality. The number of liberalities depended on the number of major events worthy of commemoration and also on the amount of wealth that swelled the imperial purse. Depicted with Pius, is Liberalitas, pouring coins into a citizen's outstretched toga.

The tradition continued late into the empire, as illustrated by an aureus of Gratian, struck either for his fifth (AD 372) or tenth (AD 377) anniversary. The reverse depicts the emperor, riding in a "solar" chariot symbolically tossing coins to the populace. The denomination of aureus is rare this late in the empire and would have been used only for a commemorative piece such as this.

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& &



Antoninus Pius, AD AV aureus (x1.5)



Restitutor / Reparatio



Restoration of the Standards

Augustus, 27 BC - AD 14

AR denarius

Among the most popular of propagandists: themes among Roman emperors was the restoration theme. This often took on military overtones, but included civil reforms ^no\ projects as well, The list of rulers who restored something or other is incredibly long.

One of the most important symbols of Roman strength was the stan-dard carried by each legion into battle. To lose its standards was the worst fate that could befall a legion of the Roman army. In 53 BC, Cras-sus took 40,000 Roman troops into Mesopotamia to plunder the Parthian empire. He was met by Orodes II and 10,000 Parthian cavalry, which massacred 20,000 Romans and took 10,000 prisoners along with the legion's standards and the head of Crassus. The standards were finally restored to Rome during the reign of Augustus—an event of huge importance to the Roman people and commemorated on a special coinage.

The first Jewish revolt against Rome reached crises proportions in AD 66. In response, Nero sent his most distinguished general, Flavius Vespasianus and the best legions at his disposal. Palestine was crushed by mid 68, except for the city of Jerusalem. On the death of Nero, Vespasian was proclaimed emperor and left his son Titus to prosecute the war. The ultimate victory and restoration of Judaea was commemorated on a special issue referred to as the "Judaea Capta" series.

Postumus, the usurper in Gaul and Britain, was able to accomplish more in terms of frontier security than his legitimate predecessors. The reverse of this "Restitutor Galliar"



Judaea Capta

Vespasian, AD 69-79

AE sestertius



Restitutor Galliar

Postumus, AD 259-268

Antoninianus (xl.5)



Constans

AD 337-350

AE Centenionalis (xl.5)

antoninianus commemorates his victory over the Germans and proclaims Postumus as the "Restorer of GauT. The personification of Gaul is shown kneeling before the victorious emperor who offers a hand to raise it.

The FELTEMP REPARATIO reverse, inaugurated about AD 348, proclaimed the "restoration of happy times" for Rome's citizens. The inscription was coupled with at least seven different reverse motifs which were struck in gold, silver and bronze. Typically, the motifs depict the subjugation of barbarians—a happy enough event. The most common of these were the bronzes struck between ca. 348 and 357. Found in three denominations, these are quite attractive and interesting coins. Best of all, they are typically inexpensive in the marketplace.

For an in-depth discussion of this series see "FEL. TEMP. REPARATIO" by J.P.C. Kent in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1967, pp. 83-90. Also see the very well researched and copiously footnoted article by Victor Failmezger in *The Celator*, October 1992, pp. 14-20.

Emperors from the time of Augustus on were repeatedly claiming to "Restore the Republic". This is an anomaly if ever there was one. No emperor was about to relinquish the slightest prerogative to the Senate without a sound motive—and restoration of the Republic was not likely to be it. Furthermore, no self-respecting Senator would be naive enough to believe such a preposterous claim. The phrase would seem to be more effectively directed at the civilian population and to suggest a promise of virtuous government—not that the Republic was ever that virtuous. This was a particularly popular theme during the later fourth and early fifth centuries. It appears also on a bronze medallion issued by Valens, presumably as a presentation piece for some special occasion.



Constantius II

AD 337-361

AE Centenionalis (x 1.5)

Imperial godliness



Nero as Apollo AD 54-68, AE as

\ certain amount of egocentric behavior ought be expected from an absolute monarch, but the megalomania of some Roman emperors knew no

bounds, Julius Caesar was the first living Roman to have his own likeness placed on a Roman coin. This was, at the time, considered the insane act of a megalomaniac. It was the justification, if not the motivation, for his murder on the Ides of March.

Caligula was the first fanatic to really go off the deep end and have himself declared a god while he was still living. Some would probably have loved to arrange for his apotheosis.

Nero also thought of himself as a divine person, although perhaps not in the cult-worship sense that Caligula demanded. On one bronze struck for Nero the emperor is depicted as Apollo, playing the lyre. He should have read Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and realized that taunting the gods is not a prudent thing to do.

By far, the whackiest Roman emperor was Commodus. How the son of a renowned Stoic philosopher could envision such bizarre schemes, is hard to imagine. Commodus truly believed that he was Hercules reincarnated. He was known to leap into the arena during public contests and to the absolute dismay of his guards, taunt the beasts and contestants. He forced gladiators to fight against him, even though they knew it was certain death in any event.

Commodus also reformed the calendar, naming the months after himself and his favorite gladiators. He had a medallion struck with himself portrayed as Janus, the god of beginnings, and the deity for whom the traditional calendar's first month was (and is now) named.

All of the megalomaniacs seem to have at least one thing in common—besides their insanity—they were all murdered!



Commodus as Hercules

AD 180-192

AE sestertius



Commodus as Janus AE Medallion

Imperial Charlatans



Quintus Atius Labienus 40-39 BC, AV aureus

Some Roman politicians or military figures accomplished unbelievable feats in the performance of their duties. Others claimed accomplishments or virtues that are in themselves unbelievable!

the Roman general Labienus (see

page 182) styled himself, on the rare issues that he produced, as "Parthicus" as well as Imperator. The title Parthicus implies that he was victorious over the Parthians—when in fact, he was their duplicitous ally! Considering the universal Roman hatred for the Parthians, who still held the standards of Crassus, it is unlikely that Labienus would have boasted of any alliance with them on a coin intended for distribution in the Roman world.

Nero was not a leader of men, much less a victorious general, but on a bronze sestertius struck in AD 63, he is depicted on horseback, leading a military procession into the Circus Maximus. This bit of pictorial hyperbole probably did not go a long way in boosting his credibility, either among the military or the populace. The inscription, which reads simply "DECURSIO", refers to sham battles conducted in the Circus by the military for training and public entertainment.

One of the most powerful women of ancient Rome was Julia Maesa, the sister of Julia Domna. Although she was not married to an emperor, she was the grandmother of two— both of whom she managed to get elevated through conspiracy. Among the remarkable claims to virtue often seen on Roman coins, is that of

Chastity (Pudicitia). This is an ironic

claim for the Severan matriarch, who

*j|-v«!SK £ % a^^ claimed that her grandson Elagabalus,

the son of Julia Soaemias, was actually an illegitimate son of the emperor Cara-calla. Maesa later made the same claim for Severus Alexander, son of her other daughter, Julia Mamaea.



Nero, AD 54-68 AE sestertius



Julia Maesa. AR denarius struck AD 218-222

The Triarchy according to Carausius



the obverse Legend of this interesting coin type reads CARAVSIVS ET FRATRES VI, the reverse, which features Victory advancing to the right reads VICTORIA AVGGG. There can be little doubt that the three jugate busts allude to a brotherhood of three partners in the imperial office. The logical conclusion, and universally accepted interpretation, is that the figures represent Diocletian, Maximian and Carausius. As such, the issue was undoubtedly a propagandist ploy by the latter to bolster the perceived legitimacy of his rule in Britain and parts of Gaul.

Although numismatic portraits of the third century no longer bore the characteristic verism of an earlier age, they were not always stylized beyond recognition. Almost like caricatures, the most prominent features of a ruler were often repeated from die to die. On this rare coin type, the features of Carausius are clearly recognizable in the background figure. It is not so easy to see the features of Diocletian or Maximian in the two foreground figures.

Carausius, AD 287-293 AE Antoninianus

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Architecture on Roman Coins



The most basic responsibility of government is to provide for the welfare of its citizens. In a totalitarian government, and the Roman empire certainly was that, the weight of the peoples' needs can become very heavy indeed. Basic things that we take for granted, like roads, water, theaters, churches, food, festivals, etc. etc. were the responsibility of the emperor in Roman times. Some did a marvelous job of providing for those needs—others did not. When they did complete a project on behalf of the people, it was certainly not beneath the emperors and their administrators to boast of their deeds. The most notable public works of the day were usually edifices of stone. Consequently architectural motifs are not unusual on Roman coins.

The coins of Nero are rich in architectural detail. The large structure with domed central section on the dupondius illustrated here is the magnificent two-story public market completed by Nero in AD 59. The *Macellum Magnum* was built on the Caelian Hill and later became the church of San Stefano Rotondo. In spite of the infamous fire for which Nero is usually credited, his rule saw the addition or improvement of many public facilities, especially of those related to appreciation of the arts. He did not build the Temple of Janus, but during his reign, the doors were closed (only allowed during times of world peace) and that rare event was depicted on bronze coins issued by Nero.

Among Trajan's many public works was the repair and expansion of the aqueduct system providing water to the city of Rome. The motif on this coin, heralding completion of the *Aqua Traiana*, depicts a river god reclining within the entrance to a *Nymphaeum* or grotto at the end of the aqueduct (the *Castellum*). The scene appears on coins of gold, silver and bronze struck between about AD 104 and 110.

Construction of the Colosseum of Rome, also referred to as the Flavian Am-

Nero, AE dupondius AD 59, Macellum Magnum



AE dupondius, ca. AD 67 Temple of Janus Geminus



Trajan, AE sestertius, AD 110, Aqua Traiana



Si vents Alexander,

AD 223. AY aureus (xl. 5)

Colosseum of Rome

phitheatei; began in AD 72 during the reign of Vespasian, it was formally dedicated (still incomplete) in AD 80 by his son Titus, the structure was finally completed during the reign of Vespasian's youngest son, Domitian. It was designed to seat 45,000 spectators (comparable to the Houston Astrodome). The colosseum was constantly renovated and improved during the second century and a major restoration due to fire was completed during the reign of Severus Alexander.

The Circus Maximus, located between the Palatine and Aventine hills, was

first erected in 329 BC and was expanded several times. In the first century BC it was rebuilt by Julius Caesar. It was the site of Rome's most important races, and was built to accommodate 250,000 spectators. The track was about 600 meters long and 150 meters wide (1,500 meters per lap) and the main races were of seven laps (over 10 kilometers!). The coin illustrated here commemorates the restoration completed during the reign of Trajan.

The campgate was a universal symbol of Roman strength and of the emperor's ability to provide for the security of the Roman people. Frontier life tended to center around the military camps, where shelter could be taken in times of barbarian incursion. Roman citizens must have taken some measure of comfort in the fact that a fortified camp would open its doors and shelter them against invaders. The campgate theme is especially prevalent on the silver coins of Diocletian's tetrarchy, and on the bronze coins of Constantine the Great. It was also used by several of the later emperors. The motif even appears on some of the last bronze coins of the empire—certainly well past the period when an emperor's promise of security' might be taken very seriously—except perhaps at Constantinople.



Trajan, ca. AD 111

AE sestertius Circus Maximus



Constantine I, AD 326

AEfollis (x1.5)

Roman Campgate

There are many wonderful and famous buildings and sites represented on

Roman coins, and the collecting of these coins as a special interest area is quite popular. The building of monuments at Rome, and public works throughout the extended empire, provided more than

ample opportunity to boast of their completion on coins. In addition to those on imperial coins, there are a great many architectural types on provincial Roman coinage. We have shown only a few here just to broach the subject. If this topic is of personal interest, consult the bibliography below for comprehensive works about architecture on Roman coins.

One of the references listed below is a soon to be published compilation of articles written by Marvin Tameanko. Many of these articles were contributed to *The Celator* over the past decade, others have appeared elsewhere, and some are previously unpublished. These articles are a treasure trove of information about architectural motifs on ancient coins, and include excellent line drawings by the hand of the author.

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Astrology



Anonymous, 217-215 BC AE undo, Sol I Luna

No, the reverse of this lovely Republican bronze is not the prototype for today's

"smiley Luc"\\ Actually it is a reference to Luna (the Moon) and the obverse is a reference to Sol (the Sun). The single dots on the obverse and reverse are value indicators signifying one unit (uncia). The stars on the reverse would seem to represent the protective powers of the Dioscouri. The depiction of astral figures on ancient coins was popular from the earliest times and the Romans issued a great many coins with allusions to the stars or planets. To them, the Sun and Moon were also regarded as planets and of course the outermost planets of our solar system were unknown at the time. The core belief of astrology was, and still is, that the stars and planets, through their movements, exert a major influence on the affairs of mankind. In ancient times, astronomy and astrology were essentially synonymous.

Astrology and propaganda share the inspiration for a facing portrayal of Sol's Quadriga. The Sun, as an astrological entity, played a very important role in the formulating of predictions and explanations. This early Republican version of a facing quadriga was derived from Greek art, but remained popular, as a generic motif, well into the imperial era. In this particular case, the motif may also allude to the submission of the East (represented by the Sun) in 189/8 BC to Cn, Manlius Vulso, an ancestor of the moneyer issuing this coin.

The horoscope of Augustus was extraordinary, and being a master politician, he never failed to play on that portent of great destiny. His natal sign, Capricorn, was engraved on signet rings, and also on dies for coinage. Capricorn foretold the destiny of Augustus as master of the entire Roman world. Capricorn also was an important mythological symbol, as a



A. Manlius Q.f. Sergianus 118-107 BC, AR denarius

rrym*



Augustus, 24-20 BC Cistophoric tetradrachm struck at Ephesus (x1.25)

MI



Augustus, 19-18 BC AR denarius

helper to Jupiter, which could promote Augustus as the savior of the Roman people—certainly a provider of abundance; as characterized by the cornucopia on Ephesian tetradrachms. This was not entirely propaganda, however, as the astrologers—those who followed them—firmly believed that Augustus was horn to omnipotence. Whether Augustus himself truly believed in the predictions, or simply used them to his advantage, can never be known. The Capricorn motif, with minor variations, appears on aurei, denarii, and on cistophoric tetradrachms like the one illustrated on the previous page.

One of the most popular of astronomical representations on Roman coinage is the comet portrayed on a denarius of Augustus. This heavenly body, which appeared in 17 BC, was considered to be associated with the death and deification of Julius Caesar, the great-uncle of Augustus. It was, in fact, regarded as the reappearance of the soul of Caesar. It is accompanied on this coin type by the inscription *Divvs Iulius* which acknowledges Caesar as a god.

Meteorites were an item of fascination and awe to the ancients. Not surprisingly, the Romans sometimes portrayed meteorites on their coins. One example which appears in several cases, especially during the Severan era, is the stone of Emesa. This black meteorite was worshipped by an Eastern cult that the progeny of Julia Domna and her sister Maesa followed. Elagabalus was only 14 when he inherited the office of high priest of this sun-worship cult. When he went to Rome as emperor in 219, he took the cult image with him and built a lavish temple to house it. The provincial coins of Mesopotamia depict this stone with some regularity, but it also appears on imperial coins under the reign of Elagabalus. A silver denarius, for example, bears the scene of a quadriga transporting the stone—presumably on its journey to Rome. For an interesting discussion of Meteorites on coins see: Linda Zimmermann, "Meteorites: Sacred stones of ancient Rome", *The Celator*, January 1995. Also see Michael Molnar's articles about the astrological sign of Augustus on coins (*The Celator*, April 1994) and the coins bearing astrological references to Julius Caesar's assassination (*The Celator*, November 1994 and March, 1996).



Elagabalus, AD 218-222

AR denarius (x1.5)

Quadriga bearing the

sacred stone of Emesa

MASTERPIECES

OF ROMAN

COINAGE

On the following pages, we present a few examples of particularly appealing Roman coins. These have not been selected with any established criteria in mind except that they reflect the highest standards of the Roman celator. Since they are arranged chronologically, it will be noticed that the style of representation changes significantly over the centuries. This is, of course, to be expected. Nonetheless, it is interesting to follow those changes and to consider the reasons for their being.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Julius Caesar, AR denarius, 43 BC

Among the greatest names in history, Julius Caesar looms particularly large. His military accomplishments and political skills were immense, but the mystique of Caesar's name was as much the work of later biographers as it was his own doing. His assassination on the Ides of March, 44 BC, was inarguably a tragedy. But this event, and the pen of William Shakespeare, did more to assure his immortality than the divination which he sought during his life.

This denarius was struck at Rome in 43 BC by L. Flaminus Chilo. The moneyer is obscure, and all we can say with certainty is that he must have been a supporter of Caesar's. The type carries on the portrait seen on Caesar's own coinage issued during his last days. The careful modelling and delicate relief on this specimen reveals the work of a skilled engraver, but the image itself lacks the characteristic strength of contemporary portraits in stone and on coins. We must assume that the idealization seen here is an intentional ploy to cast Caesar as superhuman and free of mortal flaws. See: J.M.C. Toynbee, "Portraits of Julius Caesar", Greece and Rome, March 1957, pp. 2-9.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Brutus, AR denarius, 42 BC

If there could be any doubt that Brutus and his accomplices in the assassination of Julius Caesar thought of themselves as patriots, this coin type should remove it. The Cap of Liberty, displayed prominently between two daggers, proclaims their action on the Ides of March (Eidibus Martiis) as a service to their country. The direct reference to Caesar's assassination makes this coin type one of the most historic in the entire Roman series. It is also rare, with less than 60 specimens known, and is eagerly sought by collectors. Even in antiquity the importance of this coin was recognized. Dio Cassius (second century AD) in reference to Brutus wrote "on the coins, which he caused to be struck, he exhibited a likeness of himself, and a cap and two daggers..." The right to place his own likeness on a coin had not been granted to any living Roman before Julius Caesar—it was in fact opposed in the Senate by Brutus, who wasted no time following the precedent once Caesar was disposed of. Although propaganda was a major element of coinage under the Roman emperors, it was already a well established notion by 42 BC.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Quintus Labienus, AV aureus, 40 BC

Quintus Labienus was the son of Julius Caesar's most important general in the Gaul campaign. At the outbreak of civil war, however, Titus Labienus joined forces with Pompey and was killed in battle at Munda. Following Caesar's assassination, Quintus joined Cassius and Brutus in Macedonia. While on a mission to seek aid from the Parthian king, he learned of the deaths of his compatriots and subsequently convinced King Orodes II to help him invade Roman Syria. Labienus and the Parthians overran Syria and much of Asia Minor, taking the city of Antioch. Eventually, he was turned back by Antony's legions and was captured and executed in Cilicia.

The coins of Labienus are extremely rare, and are known only from one type. Only four specimens are known in gold. On the obverse (see page 172), the legend heralds this Emperor as "Parthi-cus", suggesting a victory over the Parthians. The reverse presents a poignant depiction of a Parthian war horse, saddled and bridled but riderless. The implication seems to be that the horse's master has been killed in battle. This anepigraphic scene, coupled with the obverse accolade, is a powerful, even if fanciful, statement. It does, however, serve its purpose as a masterpiece of propaganda in the period of crises following the death of Caesar.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Augustus, AV aureus, after 27 BC

Octavian was awarded the title of Augustus on the first day of January, 27 BC. This coin type recognizes and publicizes that honor in a modest but unambiguous way. The obverse portrait is accompanied only by the name Caesar and the reverse, which depicts a standing bull, bears only the name Augustus. What is especially noteworthy about this type is that the portrait is executed in a clearly Hellenistic manner. The mint of issue, although uncertain, must surely have been in the East (Pergamon and Samos have been suggested as possibilities). This emotional and sensitive portrayal of the conqueror of the Mediterranean seems in a way to fit the taste and artistic preference of Augustus, who was a connoisseur of Greek art and a lover of the Classics. The medallic quality of composition, and the great rarity of surviving examples, suggest that this issue was produced for a special occasion. This variant with laurel wreath may in fact be unique.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Gaius (Caligula), AE sestertius, AD 37-41

Agrippina, Drusilla and Julia were sisters of Caligula, who showered special honors on his family after his accession as emperor. He not only made them honorary vestals (Virgins of Vesta), but also decreed that they be included in the oath of allegiance required of every Roman subject. This was a bit ironic if we are to believe the historians. Agrippina was such a delightful young lady that she was banished by her brother, recalled by her uncle who married her, and was eventually murdered by her own son. Drusilla carried on an incestuous relationship with her brother (as did the other two sisters according to some accounts), and Julia was banished in AD 39 for adultery.

This coin is not a masterpiece of art like most in this section. It is a masterpiece of dynastic propaganda.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Vespasian, AE sestertius, AD 71

The numismatic portraits of Vespasian are among the most powerful of the Roman series. In this specimen, the combination of veristic style, high relief and sculptural execution combine to produce a classical work of art unsurpassed in any medium. AD 71 was a year of celebration for the Flavians as they enjoyed the Triumph of the suppressed Jewish revolt. The stark verism of this portrait is set amidst a panoply of titles. The same predilections that fostered an appreciation of realism also saw the pragmatic benefits of titular propaganda. Here, Vespasian is honored as Imperator, Caesar, Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribune Potestas, Pater Patriae, and Consul for the third time. Only Trajan could have done better.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Nero, AE sestertertius, AD 54-68

Ostia was originally the site of a fort built to guard the mouth of the Tiber and its access to Rome. During the first century BC it began to develop as a commercial port for Rome, capable of handling small ships. In AD 42 the emperor Claudius personally oversaw a project to convert Ostia into a major receiving center for Rome's grain supply. The construction of the Claudian port was an engineering marvel, but it was not completed until the reign of Nero (AD 54-68). This coin was issued by Nero to commemorate the dedication of the harbor. It features a remarkable aerial perspective of the facility and different varieties show from seven to twelve ships at anchor within the circular breakwater. The entrance, at the top of the view, was marked by a lighthouse and a statue of Neptune. The river god Tiber reclines at the bottom of the scene, where the river flowed into the harbor. The port was expanded by Trajan in about AD 100 but fell into disuse as the wealth and power of Rome evaporated. It was finally abandoned in the fifth century and silted over. For a complete discussion of the harbor, its construction and

its representation on Roman coins see the article by Marvin Tameanko in *The Celator*, January 1992.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Hadrian, AV aureus, AD 138

The selection of the obverse of this coin as a "Masterpiece", when the reverse is the main attraction to most numismatists, may seem peculiar. True, the confronted busts of Trajan and Plotina on this extremely rare aureus are of exceptional interest. But, the portrait of a young Hadrian, who honors here the memory of his adoptive father and mother, is all the more extraordinary. Numismatic

portraits of Hadrian, even on the highly touted sestertii, are not typically outstanding. They neither reflect the veristic power of the Flavian era nor the sensitivity of the Golden Age of the Antonines. Although Hadrian was a patron of the arts and a great collector of art works, portraiture was not the shining star of the Hadrianic School. That this aureus presents the new emperor in a wonderfully reflective mood, is a tribute to the orchestration of its issue. It must have been a purposeful (and therefore propagandistic) mode of portrayal to pay his undying respects to the adoptive parents whose memory was critical to his own acceptance in a hostile environment.



Aelius Caesar, AE sestertertius, AD 136-138

The artists (or perhaps the same artist?) who produced the magnificent portrait of Hadrian on the preceding page also presented Hadrian's proposed heir in a portrait of similar quality and emotion. This somewhat idealized view of the subject is a hallmark of the Hadrianic School. It is rendered in a transitional style which falls between the stark verism of the Flavians and the philosophical spiritualism of Aurelius. Of particular interest on this die is the

celator's placement of the name L. AELIVS CAESAR. By

balancing the inscription in right and left fields, he has provided room to expand the portrait and eliminate the confinement of a legend at the top of the composition. The result of this simple, but effective layout is a feeling of openness or freedom as well as a significantly larger image area. This specimen is as much a masterpiece of design as it is of execution.



Marcus Aurelius, AV aureus, AD 151/2

It should not be too surprising that a Stoic philosopher of the caliber of Marcus Aurelius had his image depicted in a spiritualistic manner. The extremely high relief of this die allows for an extraordinary treatment of the hair and beard, yet the facial features are comparatively subdued. They lack the bold and veristic modelling of first century portraiture and the artist has portrayed here the spirit of a man rather than the flesh. The bland expression and gazing eyes create a meditative quality (no pun intended) that prefigures art of the Christian era. The creation of depth, without expression, is a challenging task, but the artist employed for this die has achieved remarkable success.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Julia Mamaea, AE sestertertius, AD 222-235

This wonderfully warm portrait of Julia Mamaea, the mother of Severus Alexander, belies the hardened character of a Severan matriarch. During the

reign of her son, Mamaea was the real power behind the throne and she ruled with the strictness and severity that had come to be expected from the progeny of Domna and Maesa. Emotion is a characteristic normally lacking in the coinage of this period and it is exceptional to find such a sensitive portrayal along with delicate modelling. Economy of line serves the overall tone of this portrait, but the exquisite hair detail and layered folds of drapery betray a master's hand. The skill of the engraver commissioned for this die far surpasses that of typical celators of the age and elevates this die above the hundreds of lesser contemporary works.

Masterpieces of Roman Coinage



Fausta, AV solidus, AD 325-326

Portraiture on Roman coinage had become very stylized by the third century and later representations of individuals seldom take on any of the verisimilitude qualities that characterized early Roman Imperial art. This is not to say that die engravers lacked talent or inspiration, but the accepted style of that era did not allow for emotion of any sort.

On this rare gold solidus of Fausta, the wife of Constantine the Great, we find the closest thing to emotion that the period can offer. Fausta is represented as a charming young lady (not entirely the case if one believes the historians) with a buoyant smile and youthful vitality. One can almost imagine Constantine's attraction to the debutante, not at all diminished by her political standing.

Fausta was the daughter of Maximian, who had abdicated the throne along with Diocletian but reassumed the purple in AD 306. It was during his second reign that Maximian raised Constantine to the rank of Augustus and gave to him the hand of Fausta in marriage. She bore Constantine two sons, who eventually ruled as co-emperors. Fausta is said to have fabricated lies which

led to the execution of Crispus, Constantine's oldest son by Minervina. When her deceit was discovered she too was ordered executed—by being thrown into a bath of boiling water.

Appendix

I Glossary

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Appendix I — Glossary

the glossary in Volume 1 of *Ancient Coin Collecting* contains common terms that the collector of ancient coins will encounter. Additional art historical terms and terms important to the study of Greek coinage were included in volume 11, and likewise, this appendix lists additional glossary terms pertinent specifically to Roman coinage or terms not covered earlier. Roman denominations are described in the text of this volume and are not repeated here.

Aedile: An official ranking above a Quaestor and below Praetor.

Adlocutio: Speech made by an imperator to his soldiers.

AE: Numismatic abbreviation for bronze or copper.

Aes Grave: Cast bronze coins of the Republic.

Aes Rude: Irregular lumps of bronze used for exchange.

Aes Signatum: Cast bronze bars with figures.

Aquila: The eagle which sat atop a Roman legionary standard.

AR: Numismatic abbreviation for silver.

Augur: A soothsayer, one who predicts the future.

AV: Numismatic abbreviation for gold.

Castellum: Reservoir of an aqueduct.

Cabinet: A Renaissance term synonymous with collection.

Cella: The part of a temple which contained the cult statue.

Christogram: Monogram composed of the Greek letters Chi (X) and

Rho (P) abbreviating the name "Christ". Caput: Loss of one's head or banishment, capital punishment. Censor: Official who maintained the list of citizens and Senators. Congiarium: The state distribution of wealth, usually corn or money. Corona Civica: A wreath presented to soldiers who saved a life in battle. Curia: The building where the Roman Senate met. Curule Chair: The official chair of government, like a portable throne. Decennalia: Tenth anniversary. Divus: Divine (feminine=Diva).

Equites: Horsemen or knights, the wealthy class of Roman society. Fasces: A bundle of rods surrounding an axe, as a symbol of the power

of magistrates to scourge or behead errant citizens. Fiscus: Roman money chest.

Freedmen: Former slaves, whose sons could become citizens. Legate: The military field assistant to a commander. Legion: A Roman military unit of 5,000 infantry and 120 cavalry. Lictor: Attendant to a Roman magistrate.

Ligate: Bound together, as in the combining of two letters to form one. Lituus: An augur's wand. Ludi Saeculares: The Saecular Games (held each saeculum—110 years).

Magister militum: An officer in command of all the military forces.

Memoriae Damnatio: Condemnation of the memory of an emperor.

Monetales: Annual appointed officials (3) in charge of the mint.

Nobiles: An aristocracy of public office holders.

Parazonium: A short sword, attribute of Mars and Roma.

Patricii: Descendants of the old families of Rome, aristocrats.

Plebes: The lowest rank of Roman society.

Praetor: Official next in importance to a Consul.

Praetorian Praefect: Commander of the Praetorian (Imperial) Guard.

Principate: Society governed by a single autocratic ruler.

Quaestor: An administrative magistrate (primarily financial).

Rostral Column: Monument to a naval victory, decorated by ships' prows.

Saecular: Pertaining to a period of 110 years, which supposedly encom

passed even the longest span of human life—an astronomical cycle. SC:

Senatus Consulto, with the approval of the Senate. Serratus: Coin with

serrated edges. Simpulum: A ladle-like sacrificial instrument. Standard: An

identifying device carried at the head of a legion. Tetrarchy: The system of government instituted by Diocletian, comprised

of two emperors and two Caesars. Togate: Dressed in the Roman toga, a long loosely hanging garment. Triumph: An honor and celebration bestowed upon a victorious general. Triumvirate: Council of three set up to manage the affairs of state. Vexillum: A cavalry (maniple) standard. Vota: Vows, or prayers, for a specified event—often extended reign.

Appendix II — Additional References

the books and articles listed here are mentioned in addition to those offered at the end of each section because they may be useful to the collector who wishes to examine Roman coins from the perspective of political economic, social or art history. General attribution guides and published collections of Roman coins are listed in the bibliography to Volume 1 of *Ancient Coin Collecting*.

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